

ANYTHING THAT MOVES

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No. 17
Summer
1998

The Magazine for the Anything Bisexual

*Forging A
Bi-Trans Alliance
Identity, Gender
and Sex*

*Bi and Femme
Conferences*



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ANYTHING THAT MOVES:

The Magazine for the Anything Bisexual

MOVE (MOOV): 1. TO ADVANCE, PROGRESS, OR MAKE PROGRESS. 2. TO CHANGE PLACE OR POSITION. 3. TO TAKE ACTION. 4. TO PROMPT, ACTUATE OR IMPEL INTO ACTION. 5. ACTION TOWARD AN END; A STEP. 6. TO SET IN MOTION; STIR OR SHAKE.

Our choice to use this title for the magazine has been nothing less than controversial. That we would choose to redefine the stereotype that "bisexuals will fuck anything that moves" to suit our own purposes has created myriad reactions. Those critical of the title feel we are perpetuating the stereotype and damaging our image. Those in favor of its use see it as a movement away from the stereotype, toward bisexual empowerment.

We deliberately choose the radical approach. We are creating dialogue through controversy. We are challenging people to face their own external and internal biphobia. We are demanding attention, and are re-defining "anything that moves" on our own terms.

WE WILL WRITE OR PRINT OR SAY ANYTHING THAT MOVES US BEYOND THE LIMITING STEREOTYPES THAT ARE DISPLACED ONTO US.

This magazine was created by bisexuals and their friends. All proceeds are invested into its production and the bisexual community. *ATM* was created out of pride; out of necessity; out of anger. We are tired of being analyzed, defined and represented by people other than ourselves — or worse yet, not considered at all. We are frustrated by the imposed isolation and invisibility that comes from being told or expected to choose either a homosexual or heterosexual identity.

Bisexuality is a whole, fluid identity. Do not assume that bisexuality is binary or duogamous in nature: that we have "two" sides or that we **MUST** be involved simultaneously with both genders to be fulfilled human beings. In fact, don't assume that there are only two genders. Do not mistake our fluidity for confusion, irresponsibility, or an inability to commit. Do not equate promiscuity, infidelity, or unsafe sexual behavior with bisexuality. Those are human traits that cross **ALL** sexual orientations. Nothing should be assumed about anyone's sexuality — including your own.

We are angered by those who refuse to accept our existence; our issues; our contributions; our alliances; our voice. It is time for the bisexual voice to be heard. Do not expect each magazine to be representative of all bisexuals, for our diversity is too vast. Do not expect a clear-cut definition of bisexuality to jump out from the pages. We bisexuals tend to define bisexuality in ways that are unique to our own individuality.

There are as many definitions of bisexuality as there are bisexuals. Many of us choose not to label ourselves anything at all, and find the word 'bisexual' to be inadequate and too limiting. Do not assume that the opinions expressed are shared by all bisexuals, by those actively involved in the bisexual movement, or by the *ATM* staff.

What you can expect is a magazine that, through its inclusive and diverse nature, creates movement away from external and internal limitations. This magazine is about **ANYTHING THAT MOVES**: that moves us to think; that moves us to fuck (or not); that moves us to feel; that moves us to believe in ourselves —

To Do It For Ourselves!

ANYTHING THAT MOVES

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ERRATA:

In Issue #15, ATM accidentally omitted the photo credit on page 41 (poem, 'Vacancies'). The photography should have been credited to Missy Loewe.

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RE-VALUING THE BI IDENTITY

Not Another Clueless Cosmo Column

Early in April, as the Fifth International Conference on Bisexuality was winding down, a few conference-addled attendees crowded into a small room at Harvard University to hear from one last panel. The three-day conference, which attracted more than 900 people, had featured plenty of organizing and debate. But this time the question on the table was key, the kind of First Principle that, if asked and answered, creates a framework for everything that follows: Should the bisexual movement be part of the gay and lesbian movement, or should it be a separate movement unto itself?

Good question. The conference — possibly the largest-ever gathering of bisexuals — was itself the latest evidence that there actually *is* a bisexual movement, and a vibrant one at that. Workshops on S/M, parenting, spirituality, filmmaking, multiculturalism, and transgender concerns reflected the diversity in attendance. With such a tangible community, the panelists' question was clearly justified. Either the bisexual identity is well-served through an allegiance with gay and lesbian groups, they argued, or it is not.

By approaching the question this way, the panelists missed the real question: Why should we assume that the identity which is the basis of the gay and lesbian movement should be the basis of ours as well? It is an approach that bisexuals can easily imitate. We often assert our identity ("We're here, too, and we have the hots for both men and women"). We insist that our identity is firm ("It's no phase!"). Sometimes we even insist that we have no choice ("We've got the hots for men and women, damn it! We just can't help it").

In defaulting to these arguments, however, we ignore the full potential of our fluid sexuality. Bisexuality opens up possibilities for love and sex that won't fit easily into an unconsidered lifestyle. If attraction isn't about dicks and titties but about what happens on a case-by-case basis, then it's up to us to take the confused jumble of affections, predilections and hubbubbas that make up our sexual sensibilities, and do with them what we will. It's not that we can't claim that our identity is firm and fast, or (God forbid) beyond our control. But why should we?

What attracts me most to the bisexual community is not sexual identity, but my respect for the honesty and openness I find there. More than anywhere else, I encounter people who understand the value of knowing yourself well, realizing why you choose what you do, and of making those choices openly. The bisexuals who impress me most are not pioneers of sexual

identity but communication, whether the topic is safer sex, non-monogamy, or the flux and sense of adventure that accompanies their changing lives.

I value honesty and communication more than sexual orientation. As a movement, we will do ourselves a favor if we speak from our values instead of cowering under the label "bisexual". Agreeing on values is difficult, but I believe that we do share them. I'd guess that a short list would include a commitment to clarity and honesty in our sexual relations; openness to the mystery of sexual attraction; respect for the self-awareness that comes from safe and comfortable exploration; concern that children be wanted, loved, and supported; and a recognition that we do not always know what is right or wrong for a given person in a given situation, but that together we can clarify the real issues and work to understand them.

Any group of people committed to the above would have to seriously consider all the barriers — not just homophobia — that prevent people of all sexual orientations from making healthy choices. We would have to discuss planned parenthood and social support for women and children living in poverty. We would have to question corporate responsibility, labor rights and quality of life for part-time and contract workers who are trying to make responsible choices about families. We would have to recognize that one size does not fit all families, and take seriously the need to support a broad range of choices, including same-sex and opposite-sex pairings, monogamy and non-monogamy.

In other words, we would gain a common purpose more meaningful than the inclusion of "bisexual" on the pride banner. We would also avoid the risk of identity-blinded mistakes, such as lobbying for gays in the military without ever questioning the value of the military or its place in society.

There is no doubt that continued work around our bisexual identity will help those who use the label feel recognized and valued. But a serious effort to clarify our vision of sexual honesty and responsibility could be our contribution to the larger discussion, not just among ourselves but for everybody. The divorce rate, the proliferation of self-help books, and clueless advice columns in *Cosmopolitan* are all evidence of the sheer number of people who may never walk on the wild side of gender or sexuality but are in desperate need of a little "know thyself" common sense. We have it, and we should speak from it.

Kevin McCulloch is Reviews Editor for Anything That Moves.

LETTERS: CYBER, SNAIL, AND PSYCHIC

BI SCOUTS ARE HILARIOUS

Go you! I love *Anything That Moves*. It should come out every week. That Bi Scout stuff in the last issue was hilarious! There's this Girl Scout who's one of my best friends that secretly isn't such a good girl (or a straight girl), so those badges made us both laugh for days — I'm a former scout myself. I got kicked out of Girl Scouts for eating a Brownie. Ha! I didn't make it up but wish I had.

Anyway, keep up the rad work, and know that lots of people love the celebration of sexuality *ATM* brings us. *Smaoch*.

Amanda Austin
Northampton, MA

GREAT COVER!

The cover to your recent issue (#16) was priceless — Lois Lane fantasizing about Xena while being rescued by Superman! I love it! Keep up the excellent work!

Love ya,
Edison "jellybean" McCoy
via cyberspace

HELPFUL HINTS FOR IMPROVEMENT

As a long time reader and supporter of *ATM*, I wanted to offer you both kudos and some helpful hints for continuous improvement.

On the kudos front, I want to congratulate you on the high quality of some of your features — Loraine Hutchins' interview with Kerry Lobel, the piece on Starhawk, the work by Naomi Tucker on domestic violence, the couple of articles in your latest issue on transphobia within — all thoughtful, rich, insightful pieces.

In your last issue, I particularly want to thank you for your fabulously pro-feminist, pro-woman article on "Where the Bi Men Are" (my title, not yours). Knowing that such pro-feminist men like you are working in the movement is one of the things that makes

the long hours, low pay (well, no pay, actually) and frustrations of day-to-day activist life as fulfilling as it is. Thanks, Mark.

I also wanted to point out that while I loved your article, I also feel blessed that there are some luminaries of bi male activism in the movement, and I think they deserve mention — men who, like you, welcome the opportunity to participate in a truly co-gendered form of leadership. BiNet organizers and coordinators Alexei Guren and Gary Lingen, Ron Owen, Tim Turner, Brett Beemyn, Tom Limoncelli, and non-elected BiNet leaders like Gerard Palmieri, Erin Reid, and Michael Szymanski, are all examples of folks who have given a lot to the movement and who (as far as I could tell) aren't too uncomfortable around powerful women. Of course, this wouldn't be complete without mentioning Wayne Bryant, who just gave all of himself to lead the delivery of the fabulous ICB 5 in Cambridge, a Boston bi activist of long, long standing, and of significant contributions to our movement.

Moving on the continuous improvement side of the ledger, I would urge you (all volunteer group that you are) to try to maintain the level of quality of the pieces I mentioned above throughout the magazine. While light stuff can be a fun addition to the magazine, some of your pieces don't resonate with me as particularly well-written, as particularly thoughtful or as particularly worth your imprimatur.

One thing in particular which I keep seeing between your covers really bothers me. I have been noticing that many articles are liberally peppered with profanity — profanity which to me seems gratuitous, sloppy, and frankly, a lousy way to express what could be deep and complex ideas or emotions. While I have read literary works which had well-placed profanity in them, I am referring to what seems to be the use of words by folks who aren't too familiar with a thesaurus, or who are not interested in challenging themselves as writers to expand their vocabulary and their artistic merit with more subtlety, poetry, power, meaning or texture.

I am not sure how heavy-handed you are in your editing of articles, but I, for one, would

appreciate a little more attention to this detail — both for my own reading pleasure, and for the impact that a high-quality piece of literature will have on our movement and on our credibility. We have so many fabulous writers in our midst, I know that *ATM* could find sufficient submissions if you raised the bar a bit.

Deb Kolodny
National Coordinator, BiNet USA

COMPAÑEROS BISEXUALES:

Me ha dado un gusto enorme de haber conocido dos de los numeros del año pasado de *Anything That Moves*. Mi hermana, que vive en Denver, CO, va a suscribirse a la revista para mandarmela a la Ciudad de México. Sin embargo intente conectarme con el URL que viene indicado en la revista, pero no pude lograrlo. ¿Les pido que me envíen un e-mail con el dato correcto?

Gracias,
Eduardo Anaya Quintal
Mexico City, Mexico

DEALING WITH DIFFERENCES

I picked up your magazine for the first time just the other day. I've got to say, I'm very impressed. I feel like I should come out, too, since your magazine seems diverse and free-thinking. You see, I am bisexual with horses. That's right. I am a zoophile. I prefer to have sexual relationships with animals. Now before you start saying, "That's sick," let me tell you a few things.

It took a long time for me to accept that I am a zoophile. For quite a while, I thought something was completely wrong with me because horses turned me on more than humans did. I thought "animal screwing" was something uneducated farm boys did. School textbooks labeled zoophiles as sick perverts. Why couldn't I be more "normal"? Boom. I went into a deep depression.

While in college, I became friends with a psychology professor. One day, with a lot of hesitation, I broke down and admitted my

See "Letters" (p.4)

Letters (from p.3)

sexual orientation. I told him everything, and was sure that it would be the end of our friendship. Instead, I was amazed with what he had to tell me. Basically, he said, "Why are you beating yourself up over something like that?" He explained to me that being totally unhappy is far more "not normal" than the fact that I choose to express my sexuality differently than the rest of the world. Just be a sensitive, caring, productive person in your community who marches to the beat of a different drummer, he said. Most important, he told me, take good care of the horses with which you decide to have relationships. This released a weight off my chest like no other.

A few years back, I discovered a community. Many out there share my same sexual orientation. I discovered that I was not alone. There are a lot of zoophiles out there, probably a lot more than most people even realize (or care to realize). I have discovered all sorts — rich, poor, doctors, teachers, students, farmers, you name it. People who you wouldn't even think are zoophiles. This made me happy. Yes, zoophiles are not "normal" to most people. I am not "normal." I am different. Instead of casting us out, perhaps it's time for the rest of the world to start casting a different attitude and, as someone mentioned in your magazine, start "dealing with differences." Keep up the good work!

Depony
via cyberspace

MORE SATIRE!™

I certainly hope and presume that the trademark thing on your cover is just your droll satire on the mainstream culture's ability to co-opt movements into the ubiquitous commercial mindset. Like, say, the old *American Flagg* comic, where there were bogus ™s and pseudo copyrights plastering every page, quite pointed and wicked parody really. Surely you don't really think a "revolution," engendering or otherwise, is conceptually compatible with trademarks and can be "owned" and policed by the intellectual property lawyers of some organization, profit or non. (The revolution will not only

be televised, it'll be trademarked and our attorneys will be on the streets to license your banners when you storm the barricades — hard not to giggle!). Nor would you likely be so dubious of your own ongoing creativity that you needed to piss on every cute acronym of the month, in fear that somebody in the movement might actually find it useful, without paying you royalties, before you can think of a better one to contribute.

With new organizations, it's hard to be sure they really take themselves in proper perspective; sometimes folks truly do get kinda puffed up on themselves. It might help if you actually played up the satire a bit more. How about pretending a servicemark on "Bi Scout", and putting a little ™ next to every use of the word "Faerie"? And words like "transman" or "polyamory" — every single creation could be pretend trademarked or copyrighted, for personal enrichment or control rather than artistic expression, communication, or community building. This could be much richer and funnier, and perhaps serve as a useful reminder from within, to a countercultural movement which in this society is always in danger of losing focus and adopting marketer values and hoping to be the first commercial colonizers of a primo and mostly unexploited demographic. You've come a long way baby! (trademark acknowledged).

Zhahai Stewart™
via cyberspace

PROUD TO BE OUT

My ex-girlfriend was the first I person I told. She and I had been broken up for a few months and it was not at all something I had planned on throwing into our already confused friendship/relationship. She wasn't ready to hear it, and I wasn't ready to say it. But just three weeks after I "told myself", I told her the words I could barely form — "I am bisexual."

She cried and thought it was her fault. Although she took some solace in knowing that I wasn't completely gay, she had trouble with the fact that I was, as she put it, "half-way there." In a few hours she discovered that we had something new to talk about — boys! It seemed to open up a whole

new world to her. I felt bad to have hurt her, but I was elated to have told someone, to be "out". She was glad I shared it with her in the end. It strengthened our friendship and made me more comfortable with who I am. Telling her gave me the courage to tell another friend and another. That led to telling my family. I'm proud to say, "I'm bi and out." Those are words that I never imagined being able to say. Now I can't imagine never having said them.

Tom Fredericksen
Omaha, Nebraska

MORE BOYS!

Your men-on-men issue is so fierce! It's not all I want, but at least it's broken through my numbness and complacency at seeing so little in the bi movement focused on men's feelings for each other. Thanks for reminding me how hungry I am for positive, passionate images of bi men loving each other and taking care of each other and engaging intellectually with each other in a politically conscious way (and not always focused on us women). Please give us more and more!

Loraine Hutchins
Washington, DC

YES, YES, MORE BOYS!

"Where Are the Boys?" caught my attention first because I had met one of the cover models, Kai, at the Fencesitters' Ball during Pride weekend '96 and was excited to see someone I knew on the cover. As I read, I was moved by your plea for the bi boys to come out. I wish they would, too. I am a bisexual woman who has for many years now exclusively dated other bisexuals. I respect the leaders who carry our flag. I also respect my boyfriend for not being afraid to flirt with a boy in front of our friends, who consist mostly of bi women and straight men. I need the bisexual men to come forward — and not just because, along with the bisexual women, they are our leaders and role models. I need them to come forward because they are my lovers, my peers, and my friends.

Toby Adams
Sunnyvale, CA

Send your thoughts, criticisms, praise, questions, xeroxed body parts, whatever, to: Letters to the Editor, Anything That Moves, 2261 Market St. #496, San Francisco, CA 94114-1600 USA, or email: letters@anythingthatmoves.com. Letters may be edited for length. Unless you tell us not to, we will print your name. Aliases or anonymous letters are, of course, respected, but please send us your real name, and we won't tell anybody you wrote us if you don't want us to.

Fuck identity

A Call for a Pro-Choice Movement on Sex and Gender

by Riki Wilchins

From my perspective, the national bisexual agenda has increasingly devolved down to prodding other groups actually doing national politics to "say the B-word." What we've tried so far is to continue loudly proclaiming bi-ness and hope it eventually "sticks." Unfortunately, this hasn't worked yet and looks unlikely to work in the future. In fact, it has had the unhappy side-effect of having less and less to say. This is not a political agenda so much as a Dilbert cartoon.

In the current debate on sexual orientation, there is only room for two positions: gay or straight. Within this framework "bisexuality" appears not as an identity, but as the absence of one. We are the excluded middle, the position of preferring nothing, we are a failure of sexual identity. And we end up ignored by both sides.

Another approach might be to recall that until very recently there were only homosexual acts, not homosexual people. The idea that one's social identity was tied irrevocably to where you parked your genitals at night originated in the 19th century medical discourse of people like Krafft-Ebing and Havelock Ellis.

Thus one alternative to our current strategy might be to recognize that the problem with getting people to acknowledge bi identity lies not with a lack of effort on our part, but with the fact that the notion of sexed identities is dead on arrival, and always has been. We might instead consider turning our

backs on the politics of sexuality in its entirety, in effect saying to both gay and straight: "a pox on both your houses."

What might emerge from this is a national movement based on being Pro-Choice on Sexuality and Gender — which, instead of organizing around an identity of gay/straight/bi/tri/quad, would organize itself around the goal of fighting oppression based on orientation and gender.

Nothing stops us from implementing these kinds of plans except vision and will. In fact, there are more "bi" people, more pro-choice people in this country than there are gays and lesbians. That excluded middle ground is also a powerful place. We are the balance of power, the bridge between gay and straight communities. For instance, we are the answer to politicians who loudly invoke "family values" to bash queers, without realizing that they also bash those of us who have "conventional" marriages and kids but also same-sex relationships. We are also the answer to gay activists who have built a national politics of sexuality around helplessness, "I can't help being gay, I can't help being gender-different." Well, I'm here to tell you: choice is a good thing. It's a human thing. It's a dignity thing. And those of us in this movement have that message to sell as well.

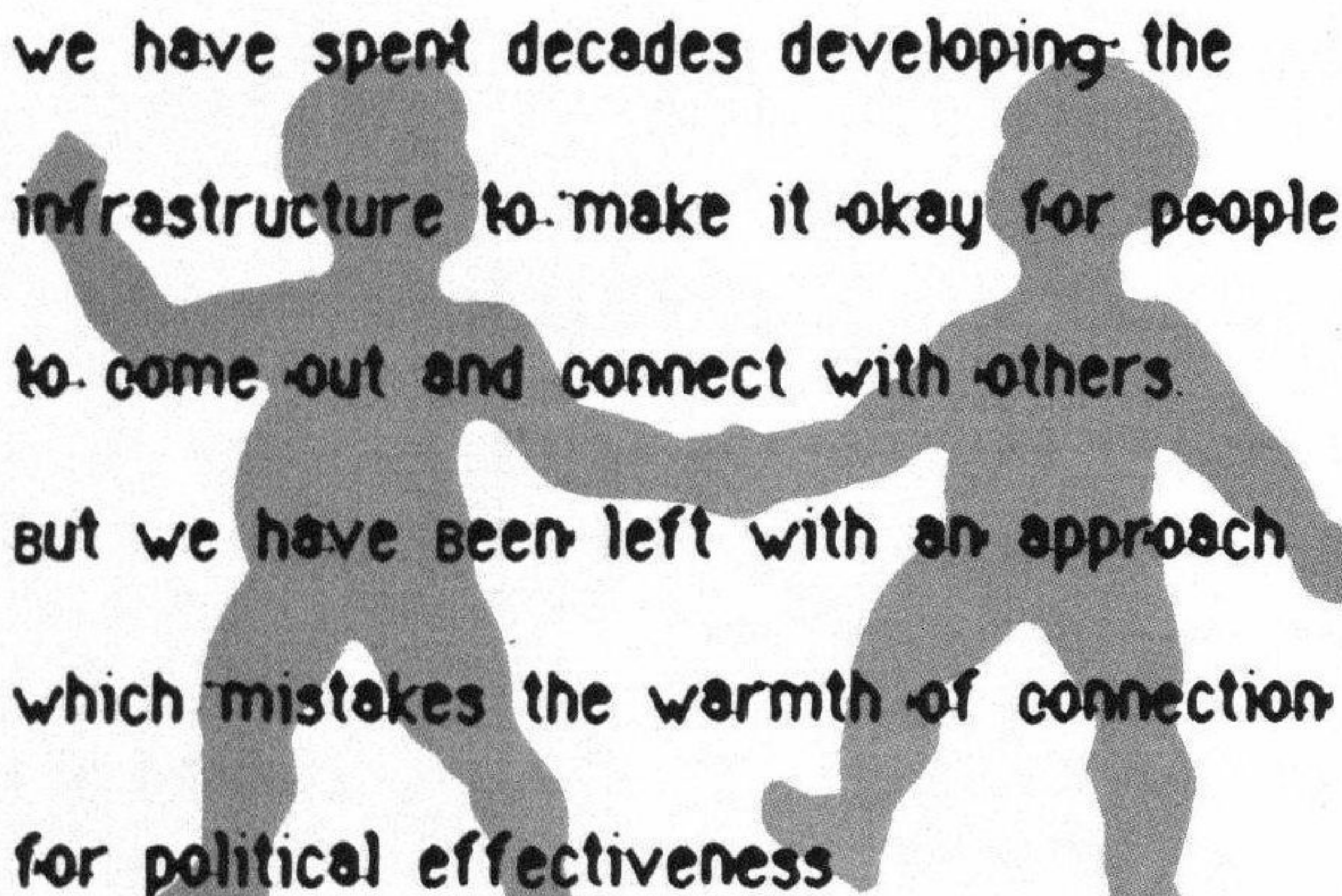
I recently held a workshop at the Fifth International Bisexual Conference entitled "Why the Bi Movement Has Missed Its

See "Fuck Identity" (p.6)

Radical Potential — A Dream Deferred.” (For my purposes, I meant “bi movement” to refer very narrowly to a national political movement.) The title sounded negative (even though the execution wasn’t) because, like you, I feel the growing frustration that this movement is missing the political edge to accomplish its goals. We’re even lacking the visibility, clout, and political edge that other, much smaller movements seem to have captured in just the past few years, most notably those of the gender and intersexed communities, and now the leatherfolk.

with others. But we have been left with an approach which mistakes the warmth of connection for political effectiveness, and leaves us lacking in fire, tools, and vision.

To cite one trivial example: there were about 1,000 of us at IBC5. Suppose that, instead of holding it in Boston, we had held it in D.C. Suppose we had made the final day a National Sexuality and Gender Pro-Choice Lobbying Day on the Hill. Do you think that 1,000 such pro-choice activists might have made the evening news? Do you think they would have made queer newspapers across the country? Do you think that wouldn’t have sent shock-waves throughout the gay community, HRC, and queer people that this movement has arrived?



**we have spent decades developing the
infrastructure to make it okay for people
to come out and connect with others.
but we have been left with an approach
which mistakes the warmth of connection
for political effectiveness**

Movements don’t just run on numbers and money. They start with ideas and vision and implementation. They start because people feel they have something to say, and because they have the means, the will, and the savvy to carry it into the national arena. To date, the national bisexual movement has been lacking in these, and therefore lacking a viable national political movement as well.

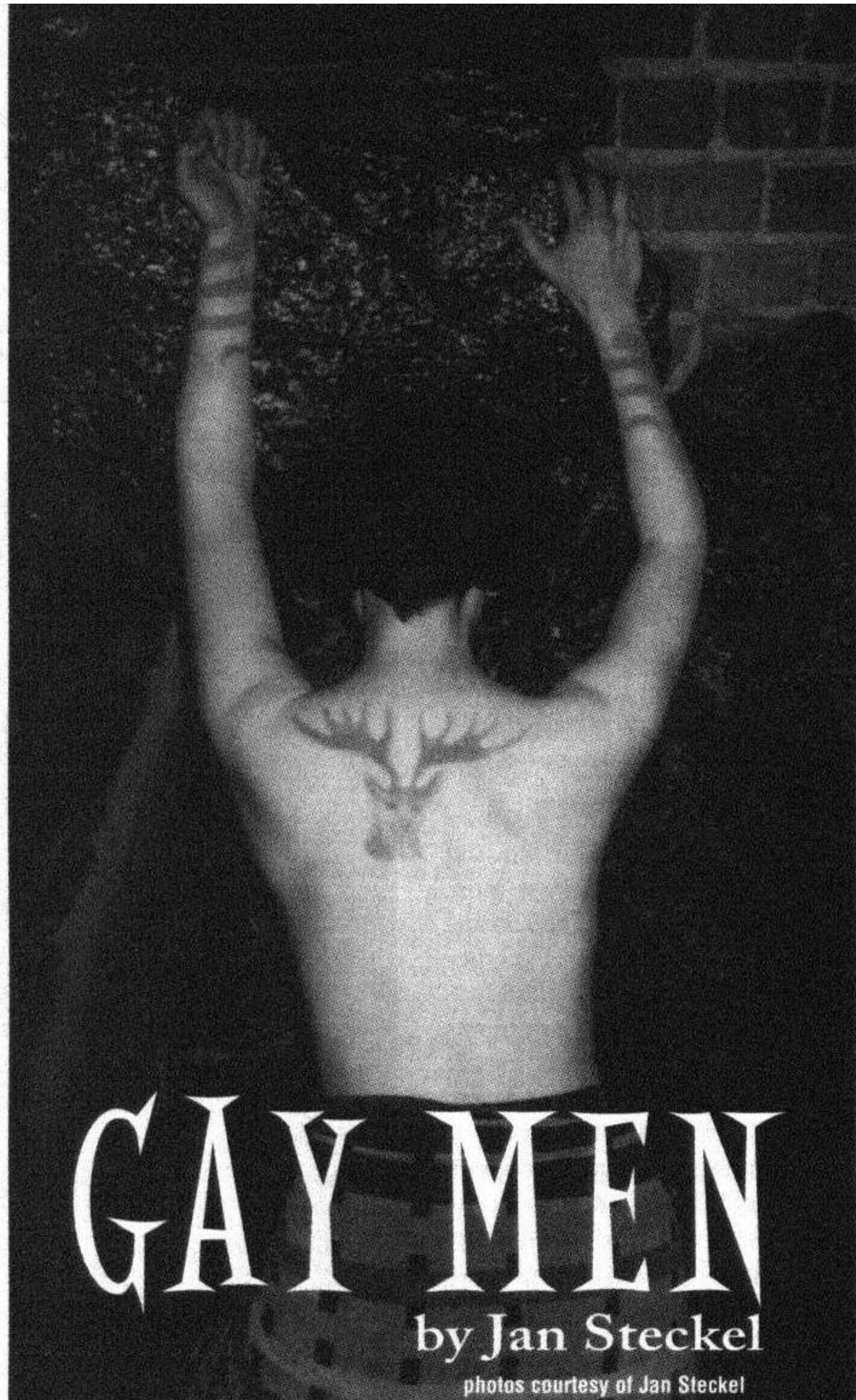
If that sounds like the start of something to say, would we have the means to create such a movement? To date, we haven’t developed them. In spite of admirable efforts, including BiNet USA, we still lack the critical mass of street-level politics, media visibility, and national presence to gain the political clout other groups have seized so quickly. Instead, we have spent decades developing the infrastructure to make it okay for people to come out and connect

As usual, I had only meant to rouse some rabble at the workshop. But without my knowing it, someone had circulated a sign-up sheet for the new national organization they thought was being proclaimed. Over half the attendees signed up.

Which is to say, the desire, the numbers, and the frustration are all here. We’ve invested in the community-building. Now we face a different task — harvesting it to take our place on the national landscape. The question is: will the next generation of leaders step forward and accept the challenge?

Riki Wilchins is a founding member of the street action groups Transsexual Menace and Hermaphrodites With Attitude, and the organizations National Coalition for Sexual Freedom and GenderPAC. S/he is the current Executive Director of GenderPAC and author of the best-selling book, Read My Lips – Sexual Subversion and the End of Gender from Firebrand. Her eMale is riki@gpac.org.

I Just Do This to Seduce



GAY MEN

by Jan Steckel

photos courtesy of Jan Steckel

If you were a straight man, I would run to Newbury Street to buy a red dress. I would choose the dress that made me look the softest and most fragile. It would be silk; not shantung, but a thin silk that runs off the body like water. It would be a dress that would speak vulnerability; it would communicate a need for you, no man but you. It would say, I need shelter. Be the fixed point in my universe, my unchangeable rock, and I will be your light and music. You, being a straight man, would not resist the feel of silk. They never do. So when you yielded to your desire to touch me, to tear the dress from me, you would be the fire and I would be the air.

If I were a man, and as tall and strong a man as I am a woman, I would be taller and stronger than you. I would come behind you in your beautiful South End apartment and reach around

you, my left arm across your chest, to grasp your right shoulder in my left hand. I would press my chest against your back and kiss the back of your neck while my rough chin grazed your skin. With my right hand I would stroke your hair, your neck, your collarbone, your side (drifting down each rib), your right hip, and the inside of your right thigh.

When I finally touched your cock, you would already be hard and trying to turn to me, but I wouldn't let you turn. I would hold you even tighter against me, lick my hand and grasp you again with my wet palm. Only when you cried out for me would I turn you, gently force you onto the floor, and take you in my mouth. You would reach to touch my face, my hair, but I would grab your wrists and hold them while I went down on you. When you arched your back and came,

See "I Just Do This..." (p.8)

I Just Do This... (from p.7)

I would shift my grip from your wrists to your hands, knotting my fingers in yours for a moment; then I would stand up, walk over to the couch, lie down in a pin-up pose and grin at you like a cat that had just swallowed a canary.

"Cruelty compounded," I said after a liter of sangria in Tapeo, "that I should meet you now, for whom my heart leaps in recognition, as though I spoke to the other half of my own soul — only I'm leaving town, and you're gay." Do I win the prize for choosing unattainable men? Come back to Berkeley, Susie the gynecologist said to me, and I will take you to every girl bar in the East Bay — you will see how soon you will forget him, and Boston, too.

Will the girls in the girl bars delight me with their wit and depth? Will they know more words than I do, and the meaning of words in history? Will they possess that peculiar combination of mischief and mildness that reached through my ribcage and seized the core of me before I had time to protect myself, as I certainly would have had I seen it coming? Will they make me feel that I have met my opposite in chirality, my imaginative stereo-isomer?

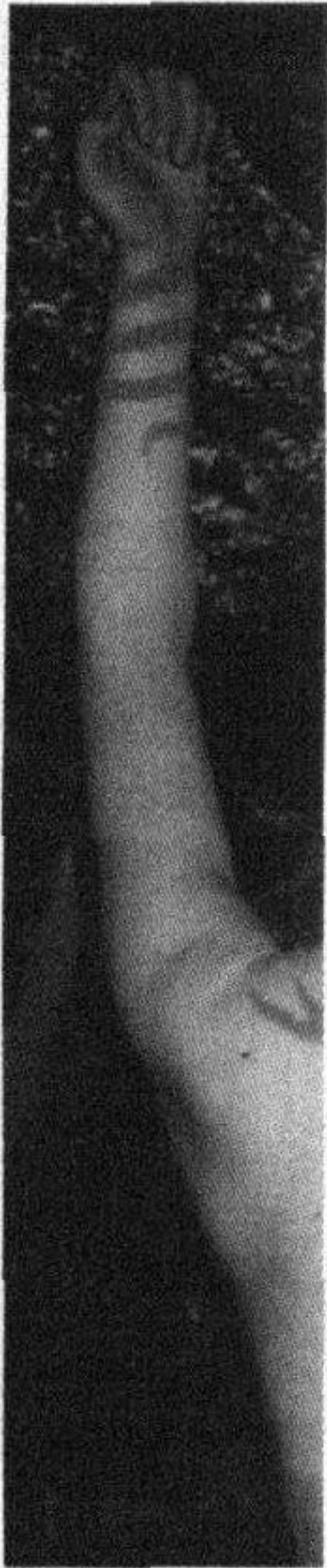
We sat across a coffee-house table in Harvard Square one night, you and I, comparing patterns of sexual attraction, and you said "We're not so different." I reached my left hand to clasp your left hand (turning the gesture into a high-five so as not to be too intimate), and for a moment we seemed like two opposite knight's moves on a chessboard, each a reflection of the other around a point in the center of the table. Then why did I call myself a bisexual woman, and you call yourself a gay man? Because as I press my knee between a woman's legs in a Monterey gay bar and hold her against the wall that's shaking with each dance beat, and she makes that sound that takes me to some atavistic place where I want to throw her on the bar and ravage her with pleasure, some part of me still wonders: Will I ever feel again the rainbow that opened up inside me with your brotherly kiss?

No, I told you, closing the Copley Plaza bar over excellent scotch, I didn't think people who wanted to have sex change

operations just needed counseling instead. On the other hand, I didn't think they were necessarily any more imaginative or evolved than your average cheerleader. I kept Loren Cameron's book *Body Alchemy*, a collection of photographic portraits of transsexuals, right next to the latest issue of *Vogue*. I liked the juxtaposition, because both represented people who were willing to mutilate their bodies in pursuit of a highly sexually dimorphic ideal of beauty, so that anorexic models and female-to-male transsexuals had more in common with each other than either did with me.

Did I want to be a man? I told you I didn't. I had intermittently until I was 20, when sex got really great. When I was 23, I heard a lecture in which a man in his late forties exhorted us to try to remember that adolescents were so callow that the most transcendent thing most of them had ever experienced was an orgasm. I looked around surreptitiously to see if the faces of any of my colleagues betrayed what I was thinking: that I had never experienced anything more transcendent than an orgasm, either. Guess what, I told you: at 34, I still hadn't. So, I boasted, no amount of male privilege was ever going to induce me to give up the capacity to enjoy a dozen orgasms in a single morning. Two months later, I was wishing I could borrow my six-foot-four brother's body with which to seduce you. I would do you for two months, or three, and then, poof! I would turn into me again, and say — if you loved me in that body, why can't you love me in this?

"Bisexuals don't exist," you said, your arm around me, walking by the Fens. "Everybody has a preference. No one's really fifty-fifty." Well if sexual orientation were a bipolar linear continuum, your thesis would be trivially provable. Try this experiment. Buy yourself one of those magnetic poetry kits, and start sticking the words up on your freezer door. Make columns for the different parts of speech. Here's a verb: "ask". Always a verb, can't even imagine being a noun. Here's a noun: "peach". Under the right unusual circumstances it might explore its adjective side, as in "peach pie", but its principal orientation is as a noun. But what about "moan"? When you're moaning it's a verb, but when you let out a moan, it's a noun. Okay, you say, so we'll line up our words in part-of-speech



Two months
later, I was
wishing I
could borrow
my six-foot-
four brother's
body with
which to
seduce you.

columns, but in between the main columns we can have little Kinsey scales for these half-noun, half-verb kind of words.

Still, if you counted up the occurrences in English literature of "moan", you would find that it had a predominant orientation. It would more often be one or the other, a verb or a noun, right? "Moan" has a preference. I don't mean to rain on your parade, but "rain" can be a verb, an adjective, or a noun. So parallel columns aren't going to cut it, but we can make word clusters at the vertices of a triangle, with nouns, verbs and adjectives comprising the three corners. Some words go along the edges, and words that can act as all three parts of speech go somewhere in the middle of the triangle. The distance of the words from the corners is determined by the frequency with which they are used in each context. All of language is a plane, right? Well, now, take the word "fast". You fast on Yom Kippur, then you break your fast in the company of a fast woman, and drive home fast together to her place. That is, "fast" can be a verb, a noun, an adjective, or an adverb. If you make your triangle a square, you're not defining unique points anymore.

Maybe you need to go beyond the Cartesian plane for this. Maybe you need a third dimension, and some of your words are going to end up inside the freezer. Now take all the words in all the languages on earth, and try to represent them on a simple graph. You're going to need a lot more than three dimensions. You're going to be in hyperspace in no time.

If language is impossible to represent linearly or to categorize neatly, how much more complex must be our sexuality, which may be the only domain of the brain more creative and more quintessentially human than language? For after all, linguistic expression is limited by the range of words and inflections, but sexuality is limited only by the imagination that created the words in the first place. So even if phonemes aren't discrete, and linguistic combinations might not be finite, sexuality has got to be a whole different order of infinity from language. Sexuality isn't a continuum along a line. It's more than a plane, and more than a space. It's so complex you can never categorize it, and from my perspective, the categories are just one more role play in which people indulge so they can get off in shorthand. This makes the term "bisexual" another misnomer, incorporating as it does the assumption of dichotomy.

In order to define yourself as gay, why do you feel it necessary to deny the existence of what are commonly referred to as "bisexuals"? Why assume God made everyone else in your image? How can you climb into another's skin, how claim to

know the range of the human heart from *Australopithecus* to *Homo Superior*?

I stand before you to clamor: I exist! as I am, from earliest memory, pluripotential. Never again will I shut down whole wings of the house of my mind, never again pretend to be normal — not straight, not gay, not masculine, not feminine, but all at once and none of these: I am the bisexual artist, and I refuse to differentiate. I am the stem cell of the human line, the representative of mankind at its most complete. Men like me composed the greatest ballads, epics and dramas, because we could become any character; we understood as well what it meant to be a woman as a man, a heterosexual as a homosexual, the lover as the beloved. I see traces of others like me throughout history, shot like gold thread all through the red silk of literature, glittering like mica in the gravel running through the glass of time. I may be a totem that has been with us since before writing, or a step in the evolution of the species, but I am something the world must not be allowed to do away with. I do exist, and I have a right to exist.

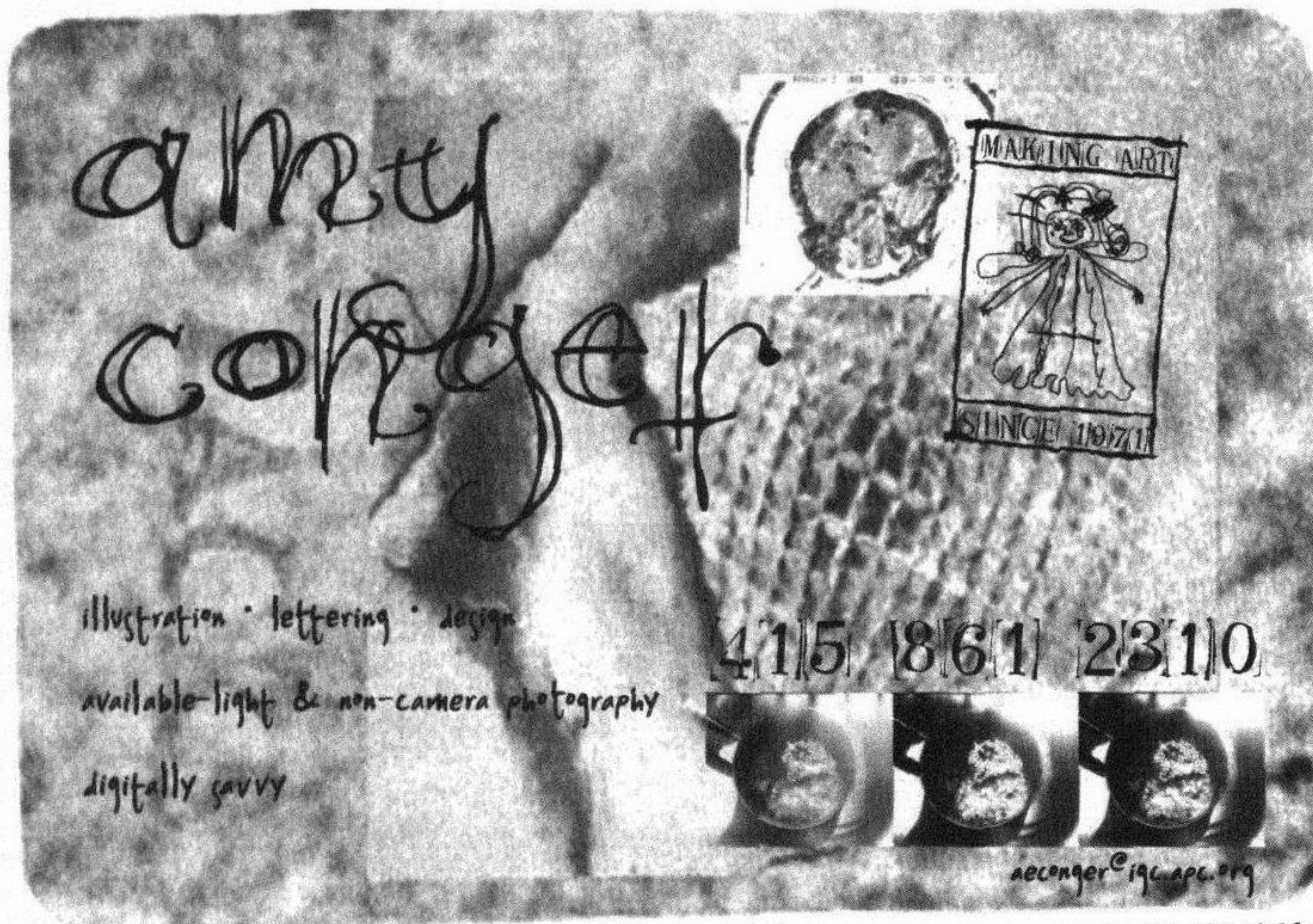


Do you really want to do to me what the world tries every day to do to you? Or do you want all the imagery at my command to re-create a world in which you can marry the man you love and become the superb father you deserve to be? Believe me, you'll miss my arm in battle if you deny me now and continue in this Balkanized fashion. When I held in my hands the head of a slender 15-year-old boy who had put a gun in his mouth, and I saw his teeth hanging out by the wires of his braces, I didn't wonder whether he was really gay or bisexual, and I wouldn't have cried more if he'd been a girl.

The fight for existence is too important to be conducted as a tribal war. It would be so easy to polarize: To say to you, my dear, I don't believe you exist, either. I believe that, like almost all of humanity, you have chosen a comfortable pigeonhole, and that you deny my reality so that I won't disturb your world view and rattle that pigeonhole. Too easy! In my mind I freely grant you the identity you claim, that of a homosexual man. In return for the power of my voice beside you, be as generous in your imagination with me, and try to see me as I see myself. If you don't stop telling the world bisexuals don't exist, I may be forced to drag you through my entire erotic history just to keep you from condemning me to the status of the unicorn, the Yeti, and the G-spot.

Jan Steckel is a pediatrician and writer, and lives on the bay shore of Alameda, CA.

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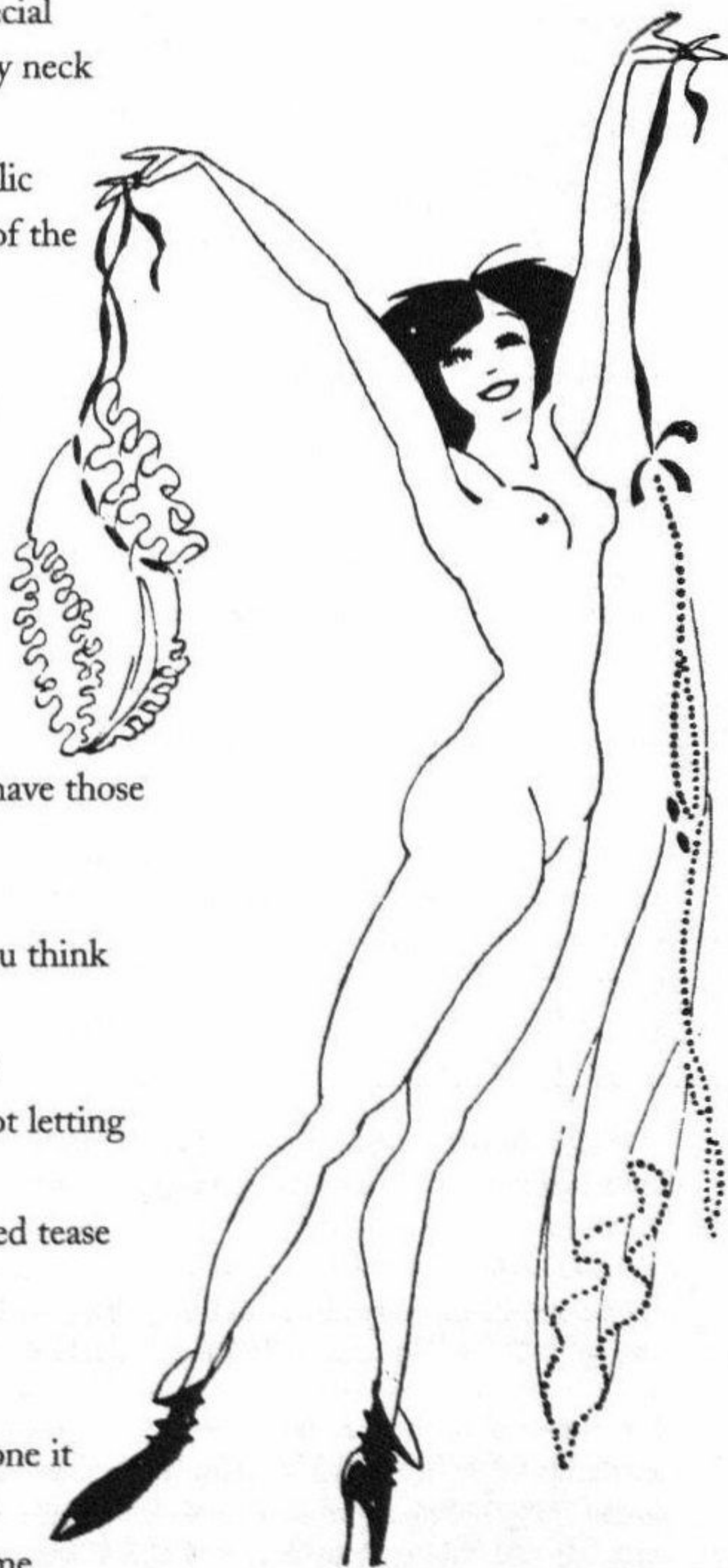
Cherry Leo

(Joseph's Cherry Goddess)

by Deborah Singer

Cherries
Being Queer's been good to me.
It taught me if you're gonna be some-
thing different you gotta be it
proudly
And then they can't knock you down as
easily
So I'm a vocal, proud and
semi-outspoken virgin
Cherry-visibility or something like that
I like cherry things
They're like me
I love wearing my cherry skirt
Or eating cherry tart
Or just ice cream with cherries on top
I have a cherry scented candle
I bought it for the color — red
I burn it when I'm in a candle mood
And sometimes, when enough wax
has gathered on the top
I tip it over slightly and let some melted
wax fall slowly onto my skin below
I like the way it feels
Some people are surprised by that
They think 'cause I've never been fucked
I can't get off, or that I don't.
Leo, I love myself
Masturbation, sex with myself
Right now, I'm my only, and best, lover
I may not know how sex "really" feels
But I know about a thing or two that
I've tried on myself and they felt
pretty great

Some of my friends tell me I need to get
laid
Some tell me it's wonderful that I'm
waiting for someone special
And some people just bite my neck
Or suck on my ear
While I'm standing on a public
sidewalk in the middle of the
night
Or morning
Whatever, it was dark at the
time
It was good
It got me wet
I know what thoughts get
me wet
Whether others think I'm
experienced enough to have those
thoughts or not
I know what I'd love to try
So go ahead, tell me what you think
I need to know
What you'd love to teach me
What you're real sorry I'm not letting
you show me
'Cause I may be a lust-infected tease
But I like being me
I've got my cherry
And I've got my candle
And just because I haven't done it
Doesn't mean I can't want it
After all, you've never done me
But you know you've thought about it



Deborah Singer is 19, a member of Queer Players, a San Diego youth writing and performance group, and an alumna of the Mesa College Theatre Company.

Am I REALLY BISEXUAL?

by Eileen O'Brien
illustration by Gabi Wald

Being persecuted for who I loved was not new to me. At the age of 15, my reputation as a "good," white Catholic girl was forever altered by my dating a black man. Friends and even family turned against me, treating me as if I was a criminal. I finally left home at 17 and, in college, immersed myself in learning about racism and what I could do about it.

It wasn't until the end of my junior year in college that I got into women's studies and realized that as a woman I had been oppressed, too. In a both emotionally and intellectually challenging experience, I began to reclaim my own self-esteem, which, I realized, had evaporated around age 10. Repulsed with my male-dependent personality, the product of a misogynist culture, I became fascinated by the idea of lesbians, who had never before entered my mind except as another group who, like me, was branded different for who they chose to love.

Now our women's studies professor was having us read about them — politically, emotionally, and even sexually (erotic poetry with fruit imagery comes to mind). Lesbian separatism especially intrigued me since it represented the ultimate escape from male-dependency, and I admired those who were able to choose that option.

So there I was, a straight girl, writing my paper on lesbian separatist communities. I was also reading things like *Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian Existence* and *The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm*, becoming outraged that society had conditioned me to view myself as "needing" men both emotionally and sexually without acknowledging any other option.

I became one of these straight-but-not-narrow types. I was in a relationship with a man, which had grown with my new-found independence and made room for it. I quietly decided that, should this relationship end and I was single again, I would definitely consider the possibility that my next partner could be a woman. And so my life went on, but the seed had been planted.

I went away to graduate school, and my three-year relationship with this man became a long-distance one. A few months after the move, trying to reconnect with my women's studies roots, I contacted a woman living in the same city who had been in my undergraduate women's studies program, notorious for her radicalism, but whom I had never met. I learned that she had been attending Lesbian Avenger meetings, and I wondered why my women's studies teacher told me that I would have much in common with this person, since I had a boyfriend.

We arranged a meeting in a local coffeehouse. I gave her a description of myself; she informed me that I would just know who she was. I did. With her nearly shaved head, and hair dyed some interesting color that I cannot recall (it changed regularly), and her unique thrift store clothing, it was hard to miss her.

Five hours later, someone came from behind the counter to tell her she had a phone call. She had forgotten about meeting some friends for a movie; I was invited and came along. I didn't have money, so she paid for me.

Afterwards, she was all I thought about. I raved about her to everyone, including my boyfriend. I had never talked for so long, about so many different things, to anyone. "What a great friend," I thought. I still was very much in love with my boyfriend — how could she be anything else?

I sent the money I owed her, along with a short note, through campus mail. I told her that our meeting was the best time I'd had since I had been in the city. It all seemed very friendly to me, but I felt a connection that I hadn't felt in a long time, if ever. I chalked it up to being homesick.

She called again a couple weeks later, and I remember how happy I was to hear her ask, "Do you want to do something with me?" We went out for dinner, again, staying several hours, practically closing the place. As we drove home from dinner, I

told her that I had decided that no one could find fulfillment in just one person. Hence, I had my friendships, my romantic relationship, and my women's studies group that understood my experiences as a woman.

She dropped me off, and I called her when I thought she would be back home. I asked if she thought I could find all those things in one person; she said "yes." Being with her had made me realize deep down that I could find it all, but it was far from verbalization at the time. I fell silent on the phone, and this "stranger," after only two "dates," asked me, "Is there something you want to tell me?" I said no.

Really, I just didn't even know how to begin. I knew I wasn't the only one taking 5 hours out of my schedule to be together, yet I was still in a long-distance relationship with a man. I began to talk more about my boyfriend. Another woman she introduced to me as her "friend," later turned out to be her girlfriend.

So she was "taken," and so was I. But the feelings didn't go away. I wanted to say something, but I never got up the nerve. Finally, I wrote her a letter, perhaps because it was now "safe." With us both "taken," I didn't have to risk rejection, nor the possibility of being a lesbian. I told her how I felt, not that I necessarily wanted to do anything about it, but that I just wanted her to know. I put it in campus mail, and left it at that. We didn't talk about it.

After some time pretending that nothing had happened, I mentioned the letter. She asked me what she was supposed to do, since I didn't want to do anything about my feelings. I said that I was in a relationship, as was she (which she had never talked about other than to say it was open and they did not necessarily lay claim to each other exclusively). She asked me if I wanted to continue the relationship that I was already in.

I told her I did not want to break up with my boyfriend for anyone else. I wanted it to be because things weren't working out between us. But it was clearly an either-or choice: I was unhappy with my boyfriend and wanted her instead (so I was a lesbian), or I was happy with my boyfriend (and straight).

I broke up with my boyfriend. I didn't tell him about her. It wasn't about her; it was about the way he was treating me. But interacting with her made me realize that I could be treated so

much better. After several days of apologizing, he wondered what else it was, so I finally told him. On the road back home, crying, I stopped at a pay phone and told him I agreed to work things out with him.

I called her; she said she wanted to come over and use my computer. I said, "sure." Then I told her about my decision not to break up. She sounded understanding: "Good, I'm glad that's what you wanted." She didn't come over to use my computer.

We continued to be good friends, both of us in our respective relationships, not talking about it for a while. It started to seem strange to me that I was going on as a normal straight girl, when there was this sort of secret that I knew about myself: that I was attracted to a woman, and might very well have been with one.



See Am I Really Bisexual? (p.14)

Am I Really Bisexual? (from p.13)

She and I finally talked about it one day. I said, "What does this all mean?" It was then that she brought up the word "bisexual." Perhaps I had heard it, but hadn't given it much thought. I couldn't be one anyway; I hadn't been with a woman, I thought. And then she said something to me that I have never forgotten: Plenty of straight people haven't been with anyone of the opposite sex, yet label themselves as straight. So why should I need to be with a woman to call myself bisexual?

"That's it," I decided, "I'm bisexual." I had accepted it; all I had to do was tell my boyfriend. His response? "I already knew." So that was easy — admitting it to myself was the hardest part.

I felt safest and happiest around her and her friends more than anyone else, but I still didn't feel like I really completely fit in. I didn't even know whether she had felt the same about me. If I hadn't offered myself when we met, I didn't think it was fair to ask anything of her.

We continued our friendship. Several months later, I was there for her through her breakup. I then watched her date several other women and became glad that I hadn't just been one of many. We were better off being friends. Sometimes she'd go weeks without calling, but it never changed how I felt when I was around her, no matter how long it had been. It was something that had lingered unfulfilled. And she had still never discussed her feelings for me.

One day, when it had all blown over enough and we were on the phone together, I asked her if I had broken up with my boyfriend when I had intended to, if she would have gone out with me. She said yes. I don't know whether she was just saying that not to hurt my feelings or if she meant it, but I'll never forget it. It taught me I could actually do that if I wanted to.

A couple months later, she was doing a speaker's panel for a residence hall. Deciding that she needed more of a variety than just Lesbian Avenger types, she asked me to come be the "token bisexual." After all, I had told her long ago that that's what I decided I was. I wasn't very "out" about it, though, and certainly not used to talking about it publicly.

I felt a responsibility to others who were questioning their sexuality, to show that they didn't have to not be attracted to men, or look like a stereotypical "dyke", to validate their feelings. I could be the one to tell them, so I went. I was scared. She and her friends were very in-your-face, and very "out." I told them I was bisexual, and that I was with a boyfriend at the time. Yet I structured my comments very carefully so that I wouldn't have to admit that I had not been with a woman.

I made several New Year's Resolutions for 1996. I told my boyfriend I was going to see other people. I began going to

the lesbian bar regularly. And most importantly, I started attending this group called, "Bi Women for Women." There I met a veritable rainbow of bisexuals. These were women who had lived lesbian lives, but acknowledged their attraction for men. Women in long-term relationships or marriages with men, but acknowledging their attraction to women; women who had "threesome" arrangements with another woman and a man, and women who hadn't been with anyone, but felt attracted to both men and women.

These were proud bisexuals, asserting their place in the queer community, whether or not they had "consummated" the attraction on either side of the gender divide. It didn't matter — they had all the fire of the lesbians I admired and felt comfortable with, yet they shared my attraction to men as well as women. I was truly home.

It was basically a year's journey from the first meeting at the coffeehouse (coming out to myself), to "Bi Women for Women" (coming out to the world). And it was another year before I actually "consummated" anything. I finally met my first girlfriend almost a year ago, and I admit I had feelings of finally being a "real" bisexual, even though I had spent the last year speaking on panels, at speak-outs, and everywhere else, saying that bi, homo, and heterosexuality were attractions, not practices.

My girlfriend, a lesbian, said for quite a while that she wouldn't date a bisexual woman. She says now this was mainly due to the specific bisexuals she knew, and that I am different because I am so strong in my identity. The others are probably much like I was in that first year — finding myself in the default category of straight because I didn't know or feel I had a right to claim the term "bisexual."

Until more and more people are out, loud and proud about being bisexual, with no apologies, it's going to be hard for others to realize they're not alone. Although my girlfriend can't quite empathize with my attractions to Dennis Rodman or Will Smith, it's a part of me she loves like any other, maybe because it's proudly there with no apologies. Perhaps the more of us that do this, the easier the journey will be for those who come after us. I hope so.

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Coming Out as a Sexist

Redefining Masculinity Without Stereotypes

by Brian Utter

My friend Mike's biggest dream is that one day he will sit in the corner of his room watching two women make out. He is the quintessential sports fan, likes action movies, and buys hamburgers by the case.

He is much of what I imagine a real man is supposed to be, and if I didn't know him better, I probably wouldn't hang out with him. But I do know him better, and he is also a caring and open-minded friend who can be sensitive and supportive. Talking to Mike reminds me that not all guys are sexist homophobes.

I used to believe that being a feminist meant not being a sexist. I think I'm active and aware in confronting my own socialized misogyny, but coming out as a bisexual made me realize that I do have sexist beliefs — sexist beliefs about men. The problem is that I've somehow learned what a "real man" is supposed to be. He's strong and unemotional, driven by an unsatisfied libido, cheating, crude, and — of course — straight. Wow, that sounds like fun. Is this who I want to be or know? And even though my "stereotypical" male friends don't fit the emotional and intellectual clichés, I still scrutinize others when first meeting them, just waiting to stigmatize them with the distasteful qualities of masculinity based on superficial signs.

In a local bisexual support group, we brainstormed about what it means to be a "real woman" or "real man" before connecting these ideas to bisexual stereotypes. I quickly jumped on the attributes of "real women" as absurd and useless generalizations, but what scares me is that I found myself scoffing at men as stereotypical without knowing much beyond their outward appearance.

This tendency to believe the stereotypes probably explains why I'm not attracted to men that even look "stereotypical" — muscle-bound men with baseball caps just don't do it for me. I think it's because I attach all the negative connotations of macho frat boys to this look. Most of the men I am attract-

ed to are either androgynous or somewhat feminine. I feel safer and more comfortable with men who don't display the signs I usually associate with masculinity, because I assume that they also lack the unemotional and controlling harshness of masculinity.

Ironically, my generally positive first impressions of women as gentle and caring people are equally unfounded. However, this limited stereotype helps me relate with women more easily because I approach them with a sense of openness and trust. The distance and distrust I feel with men is a deeply instilled sexism that confuses real people with false stereotypes.

It's depressing to acknowledge my sexist assumptions about men. Besides tainting my self-image as an enlightened egalitarian, it forces me to realize that many of my failures with men as friends and lovers are due to simple prejudice. I have a hard time trusting and sharing emotions with other men, so it is difficult to find deep and satisfying relationships.

Even worse, I have to confront how I can identify as a man and still have such broad critiques of my own identity. This "internalized sexism," like "internalized homophobia," can only be destructive to my self-image as a man. Maybe I am an unemotional manipulator. Perhaps I am so amazing I can transcend my manhood in a way nobody else can. Maybe I'm afraid to challenge my assumptions and spend the energy and time it takes to give people a chance.

Confronting this problem means acknowledging my own false beliefs. I must scrutinize the society that leads me astray and seek role models of men as caring beings. I do have male friends whom I trust and love, and this is largely because we have taken the time to discuss things at a deep and emotional level to build this trust and openness. When dialogue opens up, perceptions of appearances fade into impressions about what a person says and does. Talking openly with real people, I see past my limited assumptions.



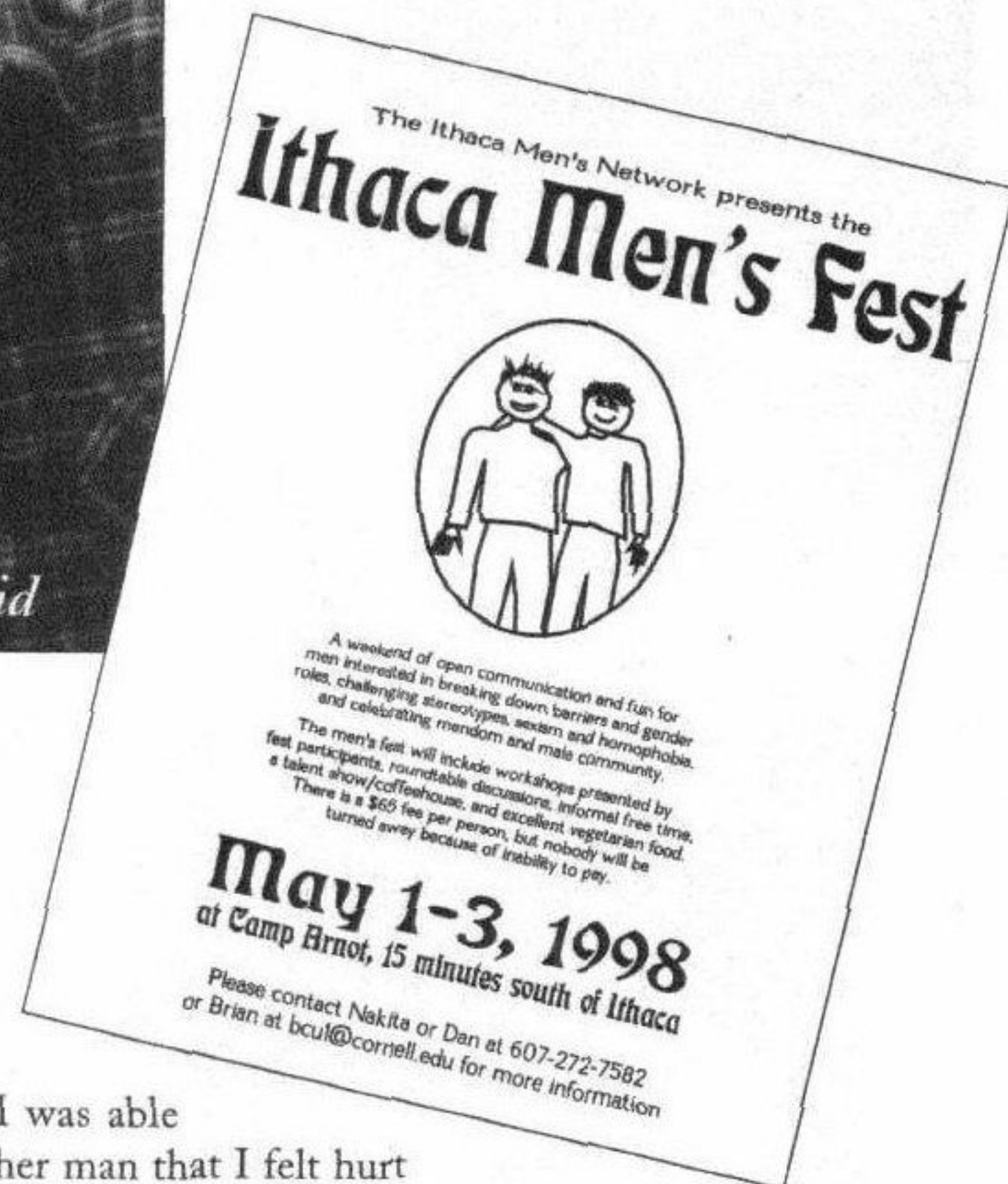
photo courtesy of Brian Utter

Last year, I went to the Ithaca Men's Fest, a retreat with others interested in finding intimacy, love, and support in a community of men. The retreat leaders encouraged us to be open and accepting, creating a safe space to talk that I had never experienced in a group of men. For the first time in my life, I felt a sense of male community that was warm and accepting. Emotional and physical space were shared rather than guarded. Although it was frightening to be without the distance and superficiality that I'm used to, it felt real and honest, and encouraged me that male sharing is possible.

I discovered this internalized sexism through the coming-out process and my desires to be close to men, but it is a separate issue from sexuality. This sexism appears in first impressions and long term friendships alike. It strains my opinions of both close relatives and strangers. It is not even clear in specific cases; it's a subtle feeling that I don't give men the benefit of the doubt about being kind and sensitive people. These prejudices are more than occasional opinions, and are integrated into the way I perceive the world.

Despite this new awareness of how I perceive male identity, at times I find myself further disheartened with my current situation. In most of my relationships with men, I feel isolated and distanced. I still find my first impressions to be based on sexist stereotypes, and I continue to despair and mourn rather than devote the energy to nurturing this male connection. But I see this awareness and depression as a natural step towards change. I am energetic and optimistic for the future.

This May, I went back to the Men's Fest, excited about seeking what I started to find the year before, a nurturing male community. Again, the retreat was exhilarating, giving me a strong sense of sharing and trust.



For the first time, I was able to tell another man that I felt hurt from a situation that involved him, in a way that felt positive and safe for both of us. These men didn't play out their socialized roles as competitors and aggressors. I heard people talk about male depression as a natural symptom of living in an unhealthy world. It suddenly became possible to ask for simple things that I wanted (and even get them) without feeling weak or foolish.

As I talk more with other men, I find new positive role models who do not fit, and are equally disenchanted with the male stereotype. This gathering of men is male community, and what it takes to develop is communication, respect, and the desire for intimacy and support. Okay, it takes a lot of work and energy too, but the results are rewarding and inspiring, and I am only just beginning. Now that I know that male intimacy is possible, what remains is to start this openness and sharing in my daily life.

Brian Utter is a graduate student in the Department of Physics at Cornell University and active in the local bisexual community. Besides hanging out with queers, he can often be found playing guitar or holding a pool cue and wondering about the meaning of life

BISEXUALS INVADE BOSTON

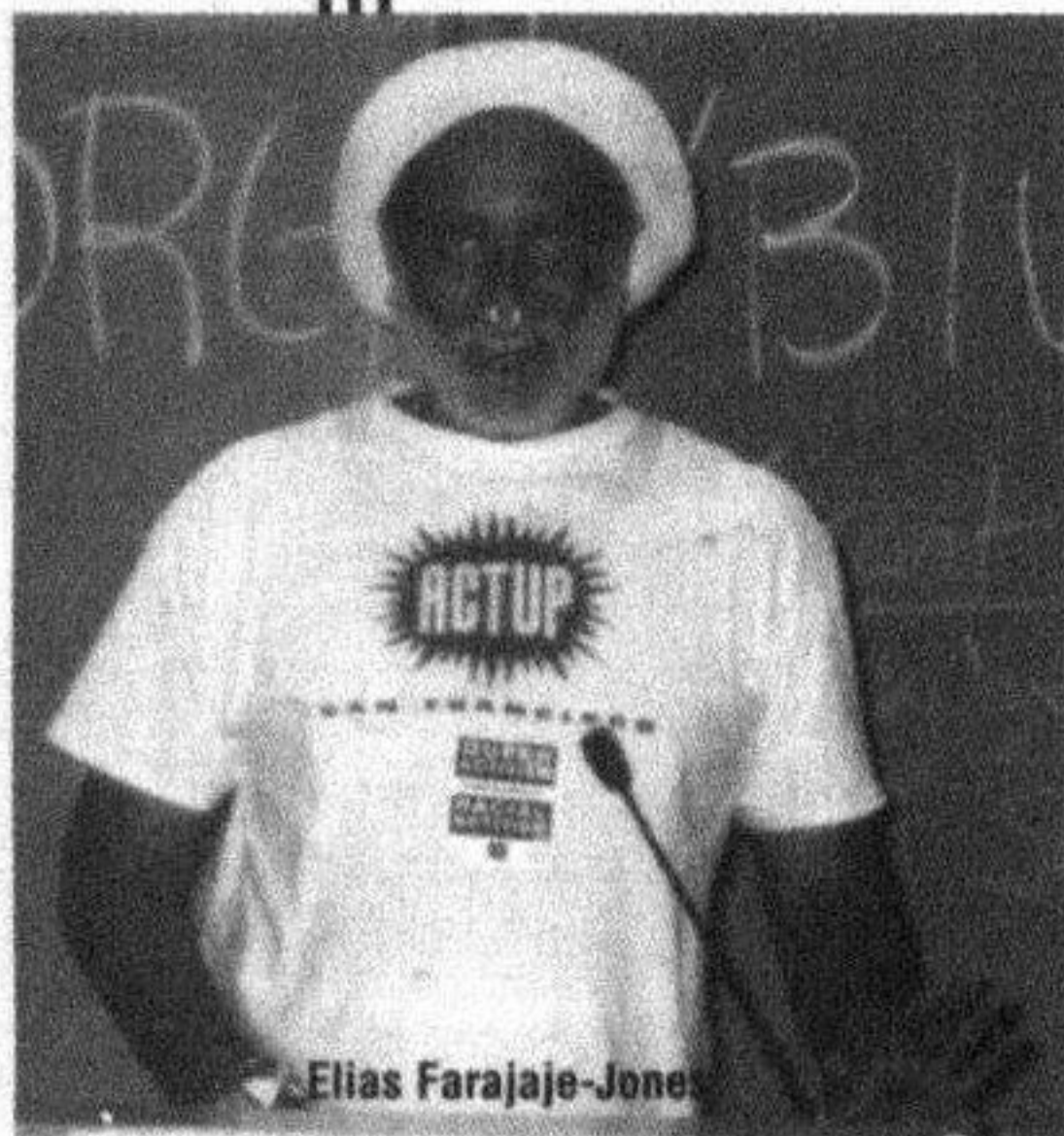
Compiled by ATM staff from various sources, including the Bisexual Resource Center and activist Lani Ka'ahumanu



Stephanie Berger

[BOSTON, MA] — More than 900 bisexual activists from around the world gathered to meet, organize, and rejoice at the Fifth International Conference on Bisexuality. It was the biggest and most international conference yet to date, with bi activists from Argentina, Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Germany, India, Ireland, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

"This conference will be seen as a watershed in the world bisexual movement," said Wayne Bryant, primary organizer from the Bisexual Resources Center. "We're seeing unprecedented interest in understanding bisexuality in a serious multicultural fashion. The bisexual movement has arrived at a new level of maturity. From here on, we'll begin to see large-scale regional conferences held in conjunction with the international conferences to accommodate the rapidly increasing global demand."



Elias Farajate-Jones

Groups from Vancouver, Rio de Janeiro, and many other cities are expected to host regional bi gatherings between the bi-yearly International Conferences.

The three-day gathering reached far beyond Harvard University's conference space, as print, radio, and television media from the United States and around the world covered the conference, including a live broadcast of Houston's *After Hours* radio show. And look for footage shot throughout the weekend in director Elaine Holliman's upcoming movie, *Gone Straight — to Hell*.

Not bad for an idea about a national network that started with a local conference — come full circle in Boston in only 10 years.

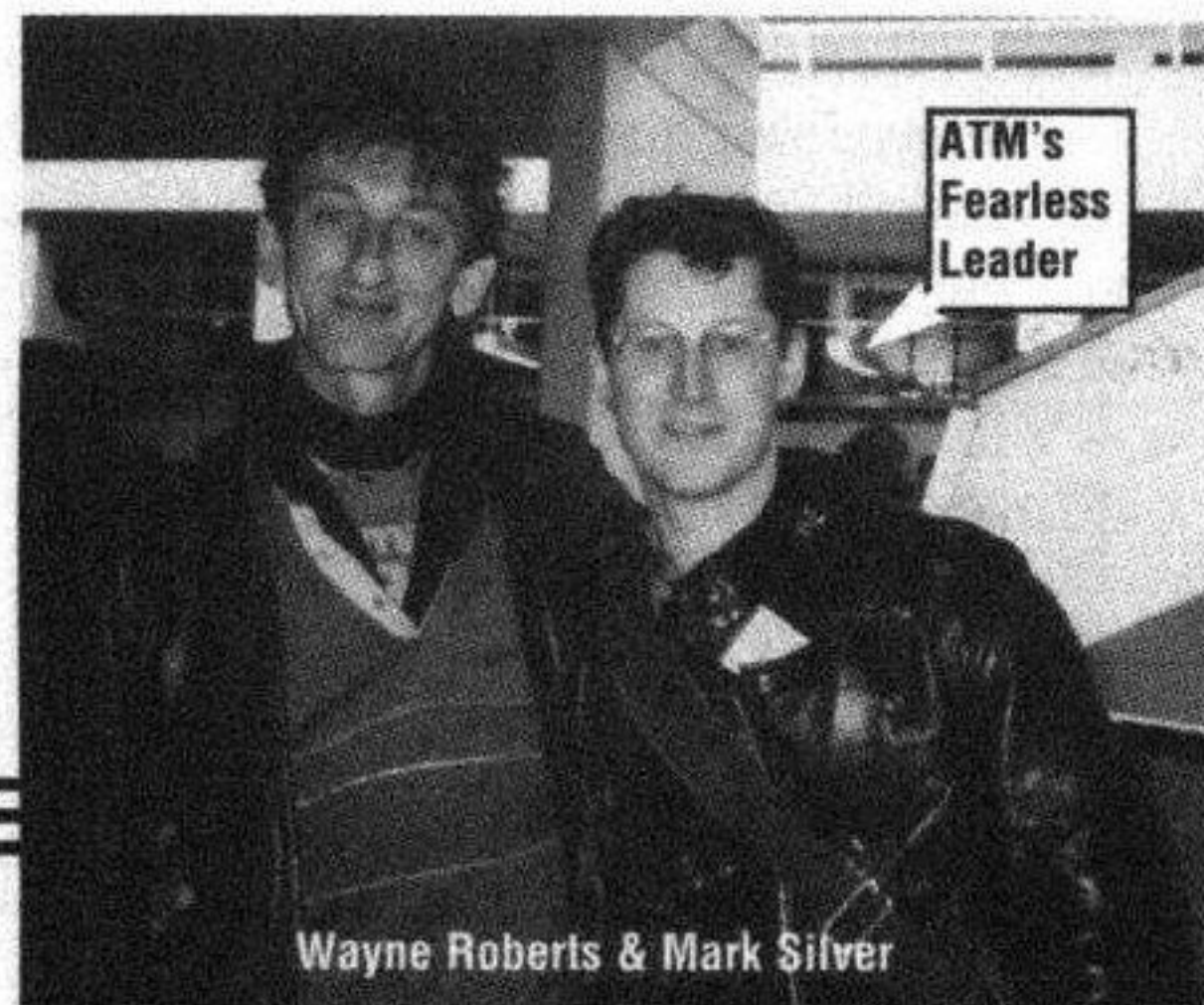
According to Bay Area Bi Political Action Group (BiPOL) activist Lani Ka'ahumanu: "Ten years ago BiPOL stalwarts Autumn Courtney and I sat with yet another huge shopping bag of mail sent by people from around the U.S.A. who had answered the call of a flyer 'Are we ready for a National Bisexual Network?' This flyer was produced by the Boston Bisexual Women's



Nancy Nangeroni



Maurice Snellen



Wayne Roberts & Mark Silver

— CITY REJOICES

Photographs provided by Mark Silver

Network, who were organizing a bisexual contingent for the 1987 March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights.

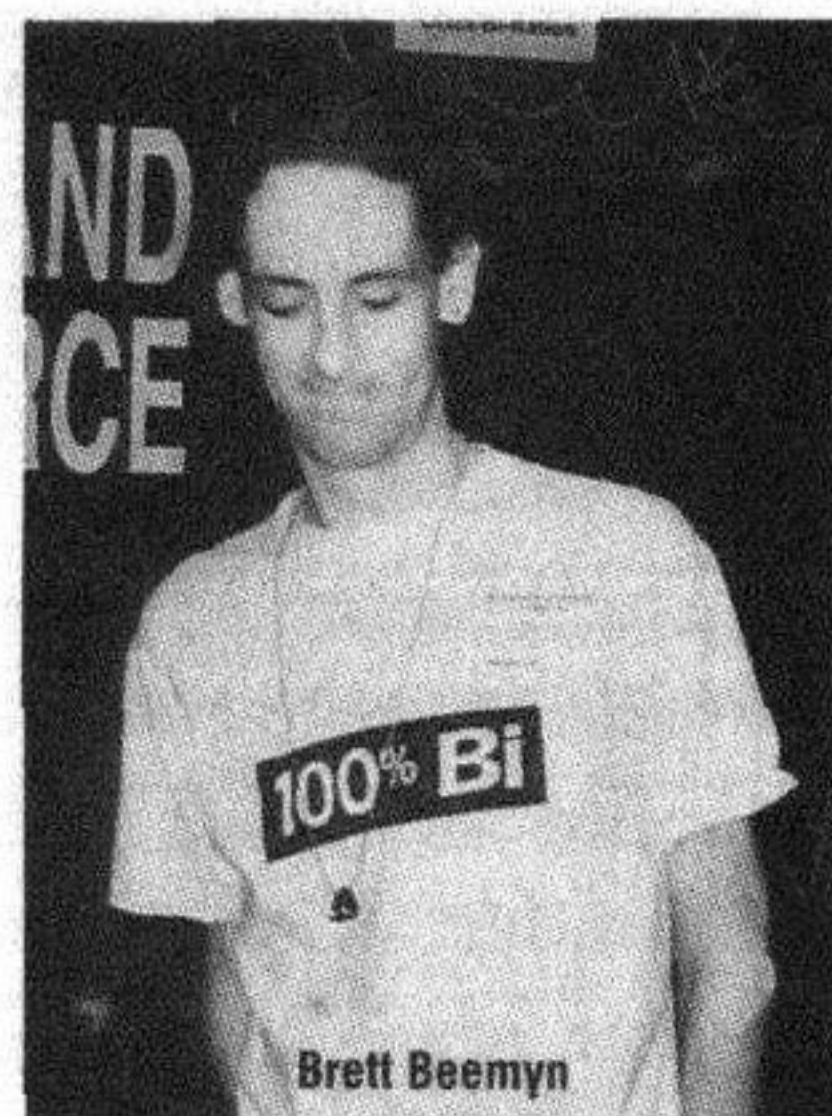
“BiPOL handled the tremendous and favorable response to the flyer. The mail spilled off the table. We tallied which states had responded, created regions, copied, cut and pasted responses into a ‘newsletter’ which we enclosed with an update. After several months and more than 300 hundred letters, we decided BiPOL would sponsor a conference in June 1990.

“Our initial vision was to host the first International Bisexual Conference — we had stationery printed and mailed out the call. We realized very quickly that our well-intentioned international vision did not have the resources to bring together an international body of bisexuals that was inclusive of people and countries other than the U.S.A., and maybe Canada and Europe. The vision gave way to the realities of communication, language and access among other things. We scaled back to what we felt was a more honest effort — the first National Bisexual Conference.”

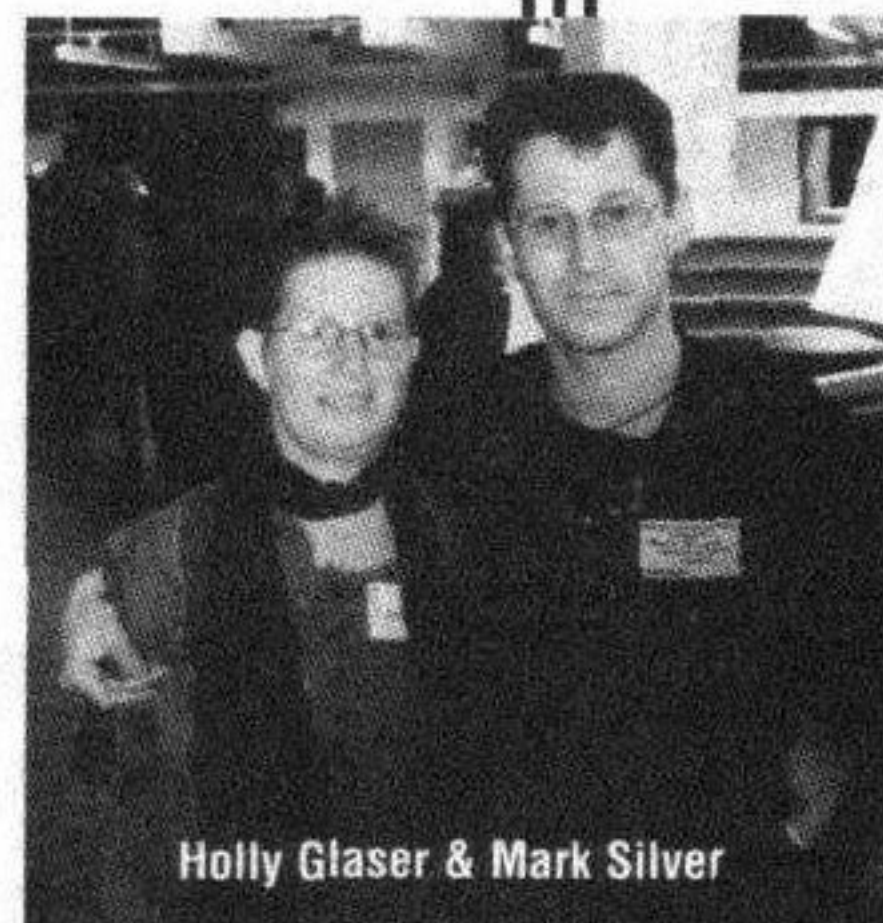
Eight short years later, the International Conference is truly international in scope.

“The marked success of the conference’s outreach efforts is expected to strengthen the multicultural nature of future bisexual events,” conference and Bisexual Resource Center organizer Lisa Sheehy said. “We hope to support our sister communities in Latin America as they hold similar events, and to strengthen the cultural diversity of our own program.”

The BRC is in the process of organizing and archiving the conference’s proceedings for other bi-conference planners. More information can be found at <http://www.biresource.org>. The Sixth International Bisexual Conference is set to be held in Rotterdam, the Netherlands in 2000, and the seventh will be in 2002 in Sydney, Australia.



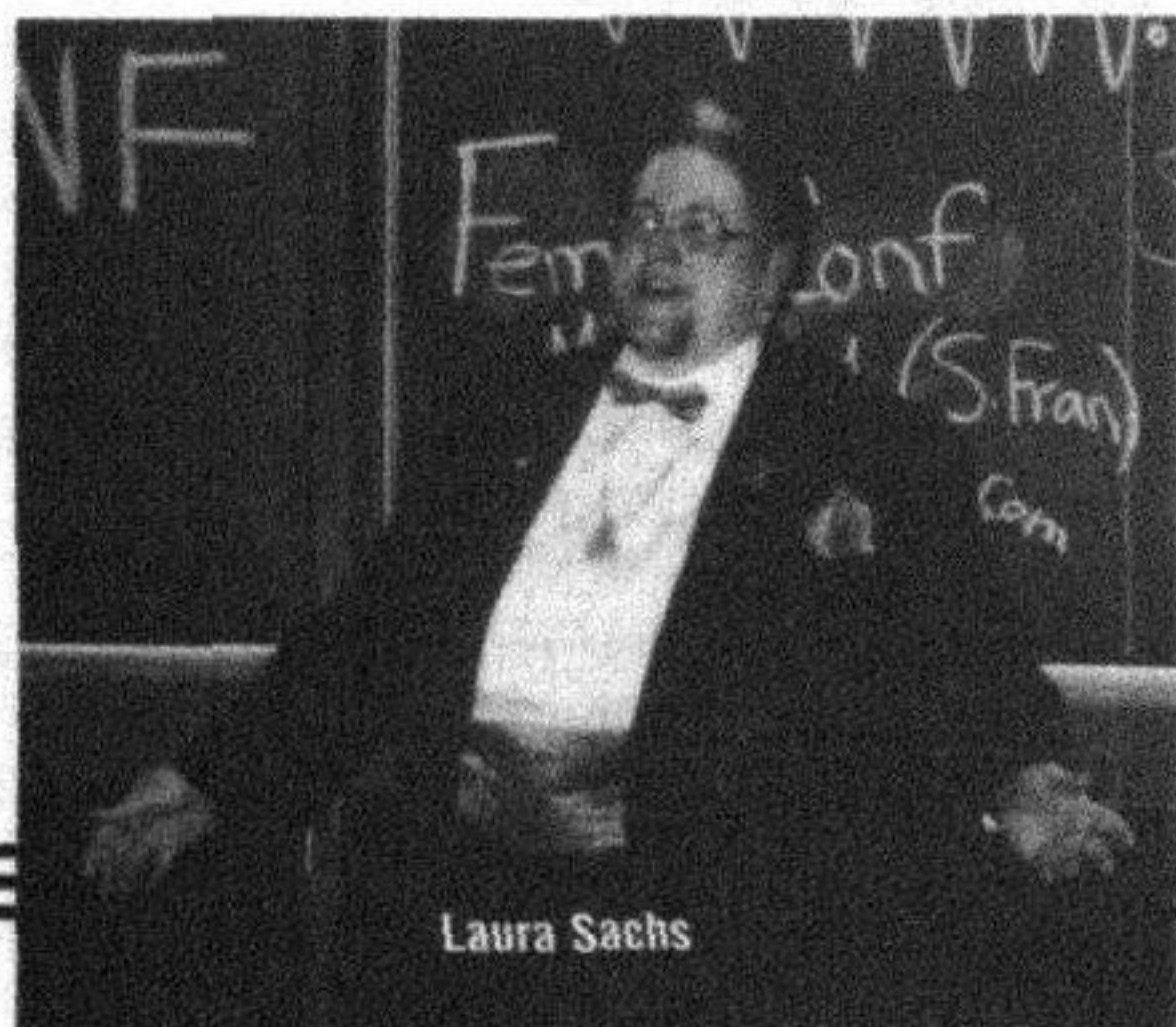
Brett Beemyn



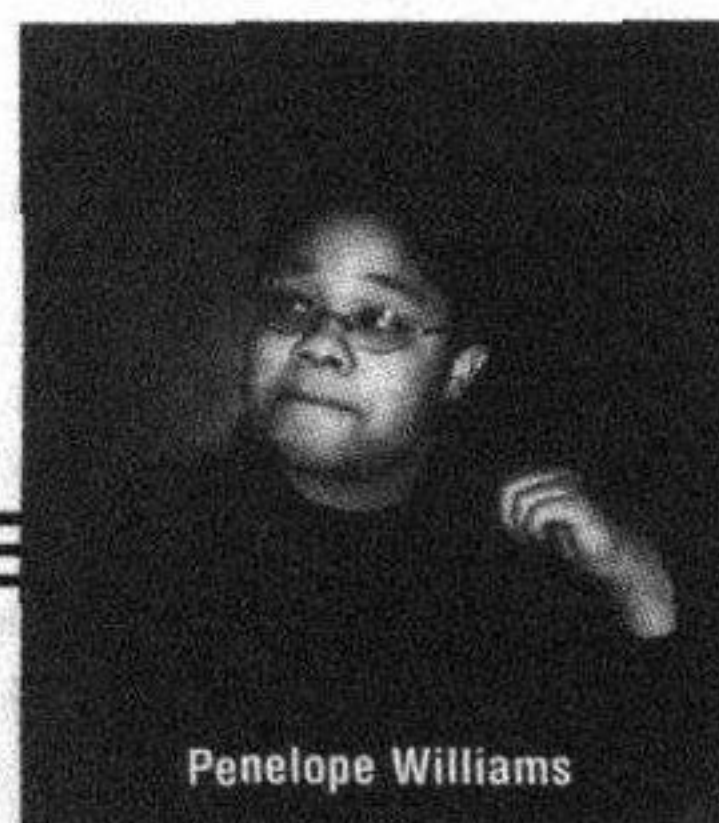
Holly Glaser & Mark Silver



Aaron Hans



Laura Sachs



Penelope Williams



Fritz Klein

Butch? Metamorph?

Daddy?
Anything!

The Harvey Milk Institute is seeking suggestions for the topic of its Third Annual Gender Conference. Send your ideas to: 584-B Castro St., #451, San Francisco, CA

94114. Then volunteer to make it happen!



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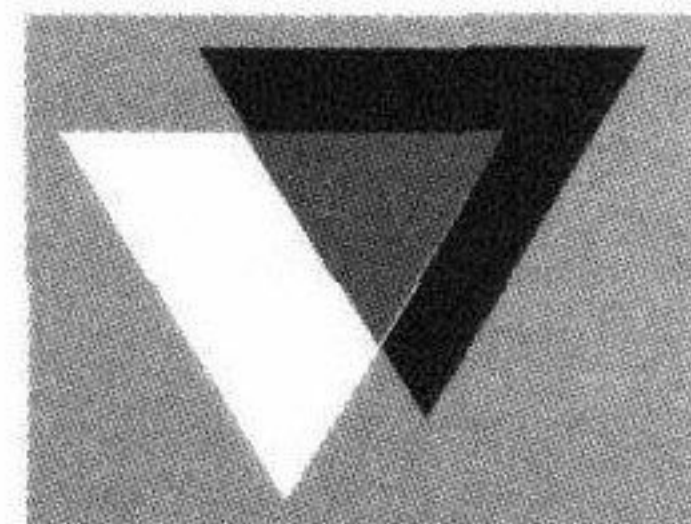
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BiNet USA

PO Box 7327

Langley Park, MD 20787

E-mail: BiNetUSA@aol.com



What is BiNet USA?

BiNet USA is the oldest and largest national Bisexual organization in the USA. Our mission is to collect and distribute information regarding Bisexuality; to facilitate the development of Bisexual community and visibility; to work for the equal rights of Bisexuals and all oppressed peoples; and to eradicate all forms of oppression inside and outside the Bisexual community. We are committed to being affirmatively inclusive of a multicultural constituency and political agenda.

Becoming a member of BiNet USA is an opportunity to join with others who share your vision of a Bi-friendly world, and who recognize the value and power of a vibrant national political action organization of Bisexuals and Bi-friendly supporters. We have accomplished a great deal since BiNet USA was first conceived of at the 1987 march on Washington, DC. We have a great future ahead of us, and we look forward to welcoming you to our ranks.

Yes, I want to join BiNet USA!

Name: _____

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BiNet USA asks that each member donate \$1 per \$1,000 of annual income. For those who are able, we ask that you consider donating between \$1 and \$10 per \$1,000 income (between 0.1% and 1%). No one is denied membership due to lack of funds. Dues can be waived for those unable to pay.

Mail to: BiNet USA, P.O. Box 7327, Langley Park, MD 20787

ASAPs' Fables

There has been a lot of theorizing lately on why the bi and trans communities have come together so easily (apparently) to form a coalition of sorts in the political realm. Personally, I get rather tired of all of the heady wordiness; I'm more of a nuts-and-bolts kind of person myself. So, I'm going to call it like I see it:

Have you ever been in a crowd of people who *know* they are better than you — the kind of situation where you're not sure if you farted or something is hanging out of your fly, but everyone is walking at least five feet around you and won't make eye contact? Whenever I'm in that situation, I look for a corner to tuck off into. Once I find another person who is also feeling a little overwhelmed and intimidated — and there is always at least one — I make eye contact and begin to make my way through the crowd to join them. I have yet to not have anything in common with such a person, and so it is for the bi communities and the trans communities.

Let's face it, folks — we scare people. We make them nervous. The fact that some of us are actually well-adjusted and happy makes some folks break out in a rash. When we show up at the negotiating table or the think-tank sessions or the political rallies, many people get queasy. We mess with the mainstream concept of gender — how many genders you can actually be or present; and how many genders with whom you can actually have a relationship(s). ("Oh, my God — multiple possibilities! Freak out!") It is my fervent hope that at some point in time we will have the fortitude to grab hold of most of the societal and social concepts of sex, gender, relationships... oh, hell, all of it. And throw it out the window.

I'm tired of ASAPs (As Straight As Possible) in the queer community telling all of us to whom we must be attracted, how many partners we can or cannot have, what a real man or woman is, and how we must identify. Sound familiar? It's the same puke mainstream society has been shoving down our throats for eons, and now we have a new echelon of pompous, self-righteous buffoons within our own community pontificating the same drivel. This might be proof that the fabulous strain of creativity I have always loved my communities for is dying: The Little Oppressor walks among us blatantly.

Gender and gender expression are the next masks to drop for human evolution. We have an opportunity to discover some amazing things that are exposed when we study how gender affects each of us. And I don't mean just queer folk; I mean the whole human race. You want to study gender expression? Study John Wayne and Marilyn Monroe,

Barbie and Ken. How many of us fit into those molds? Not a whole hell of a lot. They are the epitome of the binary system society has dictated to us, and what they sell us is gender expression and gender.

Our society also dictates (and we follow) how to have relationships. Having been ousted from that "loving", All-American nuclear family we were raised in, many of us have formed amazing extended families, only to shave whole segments of those families out of the definition by fighting for the right to marry, or to have a domestic partner. In our struggle to be "normal", we are killing the very tribal system that saved our lives when we were lost, hungry, and alone. Many of us have or have had two or more partners, and yet those of us who live so — bi, trans, or gay — are cast off like diseased pariahs. What will the rest of America think of us if we present a polyamorous face? You know what — who cares!

I just can't figure out why we would cast off the more creative parts of ourselves to fit in and mold ourselves to an ideal and image that we have detested. I know it has been a long struggle and some of us are tired, but do we really want to be like those who have persecuted us for centuries?

Obviously the ASAPs find this acceptable, and I wish them as much happiness as they can find. But spare us the preaching and manipulation. Those of us who know and relish our differences wish to hold on to those parts of us that have been so creatively expansive in our lives. We enrich the communities we walk in, too. We are a part of you, whether you like it or not. The more you condemn us, the more you make us feel uncomfortable for breathing the same air as you, the more enthusiastically we will seek out people who are just as uncomfortable. We will unite. And we will continue to make you uncomfortable. However, we will not impose our way on you. We just simply will not go away.

So, I found myself standing in a crowd of other queer people. And many of them were talking over my head, and nervously stepping around me. Then I found other trannies and a whole lot of bi folk who were feeling just as uncomfortable as I was. So we have this loosely formed, tight-knit network called the bi and trans coalition.

And we won't go away.

Since beginning metamorphosis seven years ago, Shadow Morton has advocated for TG rights on local, state and national levels. He has advocated for human rights since the fifth grade.





It's What You Think You See That Counts

True Tales from the Edges of the Bi-Trans Continuum

by Andrea Michaela-Gonzalez
photographs by Amy Conger

The stories you are about to read are true. The names have been changed, and physical appearances and locations altered, to protect the not-so-innocent.

Do you know what you're doing?

The bar is just starting to get crowded as I work my way toward the single unisex washroom. When I reach the facilities, I thank the Goddess that there's no line, which is fortunate both for me as well as for the person who has to mop the floor.

I close the door behind me, lift my skirt, and sit down. After releasing several pricey drinks, I get up, wash, and check my makeup in the small mirror stuck on the wall with double-sided tape. ["Worried? Get tested. AIDS is a fact of life," says the sign above it.] I apply fresh lipstick, and then emerge from the quiet solitude of the washroom.

Beneath the cacophony of loud conversation, the Dead Kennedys' "Too Drunk to Fuck" blares from the sound system. The bar has become even more crowded in the few minutes that I was in the loo, and I have to slowly work myself between the standing groups of people now occupying the aisles. I move left when I should have moved right, and suddenly find my face a mere few inches from two well-shaped, moderately sized breasts, encased in shimmering black PVC.

"Yum," I think to myself, and then it occurs to me that I'm six feet tall, and I'm looking straight into this woman's tits! I slowly lift my gaze upward, to see a beautifully painted, smiling face looking back at me from underneath a huge pile of curly brunette hair.

She's seven feet tall, easily. She's trans, but trans-what, I have no idea. It doesn't matter — she's stunning, and I can't break her gaze, and neither can she break mine. We stand there for a long moment, just staring and smiling and fantasizing about the possibilities. I can almost see the sparks.

Finally, I move on, throwing her a beckoning glance over my shoulder as I work my way through the crowd. I reach my table and return to my seat, next to Jeanette, the stunning blonde pre-op MtF with whom I came. A few minutes later, the tall gorgeous trans returns, smiling lustily at me. Wordlessly, she sits down on my lap, and my arms instinctively wrap around her corseted waist. I'm hot for her; she turns me on in a strange, almost forbidden way.

Our eyes meet again, and our faces drift closer and closer together until our lips meet. I don't even know who this gorgeous tranny is. I'm sure that she was born with a male body, but her gender is as feminine as can be, and perhaps she's had surgery.

Whether she identifies as male, female, both, neither, or something else entirely, I have no way of guessing, nor do I know what her actual anatomy is — nor do I care. It doesn't matter, and I don't even think about it as I plunge into her

mouth and trace the outline of her teeth with my tongue, while the heavy-set German tourist snaps Polaroids of the two tall, smooching femmes to take home as a souvenir from San Francisco.

Jeanette

Tonight, the bar is more or less ours, having been rented out for a private party by one of the most wonderful, crazy women I've ever met. It was through her that I met Jeanette.

Jeanette looks like a California girl all the way: Tall and sleek, with blonde hair, blue eyes, soft skin, firm breasts... and a dick. You'd never guess about that last part unless she told you. To look at her, you wouldn't even know she was trans.

We've been sitting and drinking for hours. Someone passed a joint around the bar a while ago, and I'm still buzzing — no, I'm half-looped. But it doesn't matter, and people around us are already beginning to lock lips in couples, then triads, and then entire groups. A petite, slender brunette dances the can-can on the other side of the room. In classic French fashion, she's not wearing panties, either.

It could be the cider, or the pot, or the fact that half the people in the room are naked or engaged in some sexual activity, or all the above, but my desire for Jeanette is getting stronger. I move closer to her. She looks me in the eyes, and then pats her lap, inviting me.

I sit on her lap all right, but not in the way she expects: I stand up and face her, throw my leg over, and sit down straddling her. She sighs. Our lips meet, and as our tongues mingle, I feel her hand slipping up my blouse. I begin to squirm, and I hear sounds of approval from her. I open my blouse, and pull Jeanette's head into my exposed cleavage. She locks her teeth around my left nipple, and that's when I feel the incongruous bump underneath me.

Jeanette passes so well that I often completely forget that she has a dick. It's reminding me now, though, and suddenly it occurs to me: I can lap-dance on this chick, and it'll work for her. This revelation, along with her continued nibbling on

my tits, brings my clit to full attention. I can feel myself getting wet.

I writhe on her, throwing my hips into a rhythmic, almost circular motion. The moans come, and she bites my nipple so hard that I almost cry out. I don't want this to end. Ever.

Unfortunately, we are interrupted by the hostess. I'd promised to help her with some things, and she needs to coordinate with me, right now. I tell her that I'll be right there, and she goes away. Reluctantly, I climb off of Jeanette, straighten my skirt, and button my blouse. Jeanette pouts.

A man approaches us, his arms outstretched, a business card in each hand. We take them.

"I make movies," he says to us, "I think you two might be interesting."

"Are these adult movies?" asks Jeanette.

"Yes," the man says.

"Oh good," I reply, "I was afraid you might ask us to do clean stuff. We have our standards, you know." I giggle.

He gets the joke and Jeanette smiles and winks at me. I think she liked my answer.

"Anyway," the guy continues, "Give me a call if you're interested."

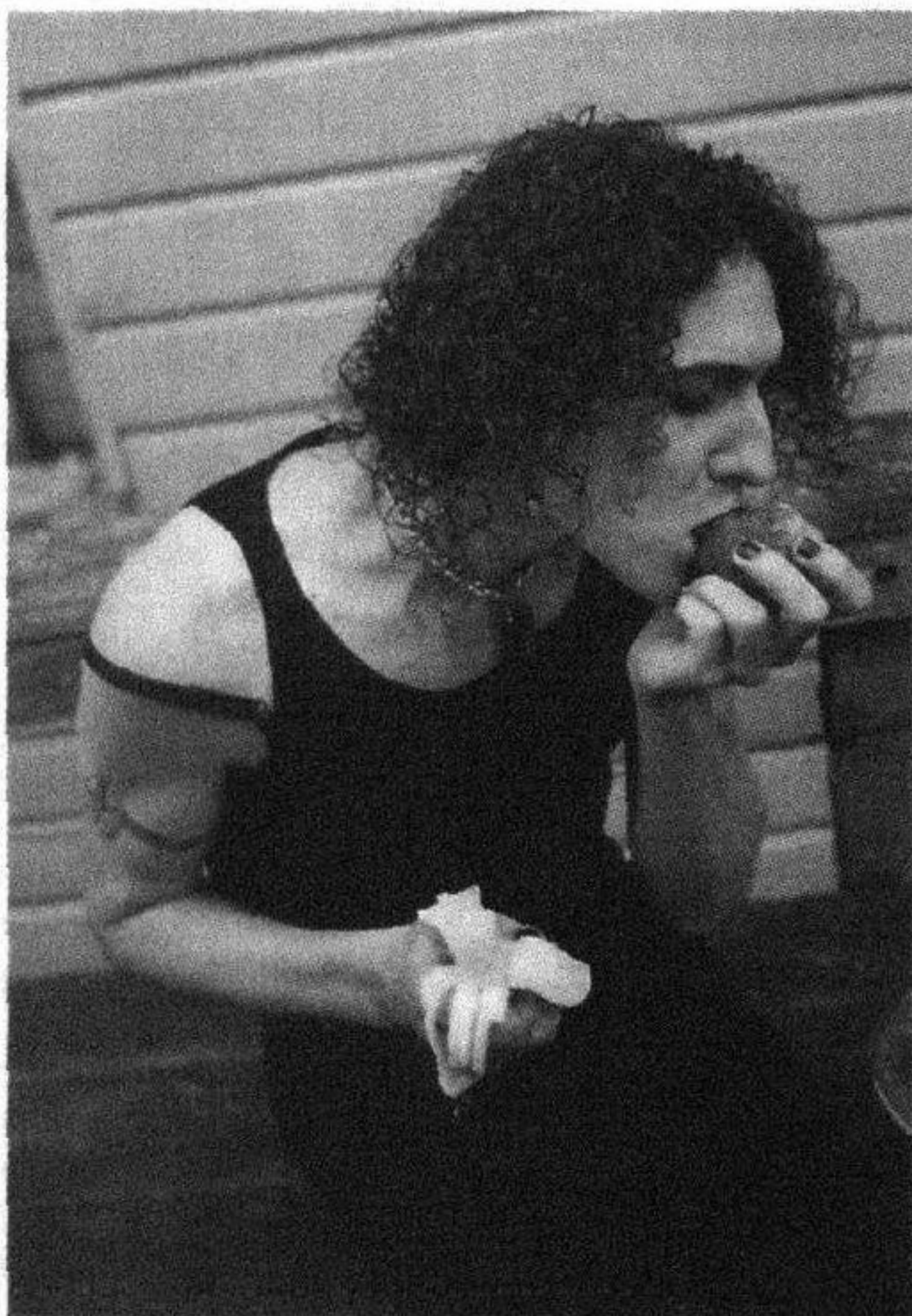
He wanders off, and I prepare to go do what I'd promised the hostess I would, so I can get back to what I want to do. Namely, Jeanette.

Just as I'm about to leave, I turn to give Jeanette one more long, deep, wetness-inducing kiss to last until I get back. When I look up, there's another man standing there, looking at us.

"Excuse me," he says. "I was wondering if you two might be interested in speaking about transgenderism. A pre-op and a post-op together would be really special." He points at us as he speaks, and I note with amusement that he thinks Jeanette is post-op, and I, a pre-op MTF. Knowing what he thinks he sees, I start dreaming up ways to mess with his head.

Jeanette speaks first. "You can't really explain transgenderism," she replies.

See "What You Think..." (p.24)



What You Think... (from p.23)

"It's subtle. It's a nuance. It's something you feel; it's something that you just are."

The man nods, pretending to understand.

"I'd like to feel some transgender right about now," I say to Jeanette, and wink, squeezing her thigh.

She bats her eyelashes. "Oh, honey," she responds.

The man interrupts us. "Would you gals like to try to explain transgender?"

"No," I say, "Let's get naked and show them."

I can only imagine the look of surprise on his face if we had.

*It's what you think you see
that counts*

I am going to one of those sex parties that the San Francisco underground is famous for. It's a good thing, too — it's Friday night, I'm bored out of my skull, nothing on television seems even remotely interesting, and besides that, I'm horny as hell. I want a man. I want him to take me, use me to get off, and then go on about his business without the need to discuss a relationship.

It's harder than one thinks to get this, too. Lately, every man I've gone out on a date with has ended up calling me three times a day and asking me when I'm going to break up with my girlfriend and marry him. That's why I'm very happy that there's a party tonight. There's only one other easy way that I know of to satisfy a craving for instant, anonymous, commitment-free boy sex, but it's risky — not to mention illegal.

I step into my bedroom, and start sorting through my clothing, deciding what to wear. PVC, leather, what am I looking for? I strip down to my stockings, and slip on my tight black ankle-length skirt, low-cut PVC top, and matching lace-up leather stiletto boots. I pin a barrette into my hair to keep it from getting into my face, and then spend a few minutes in front of the mirror to put my makeup on.

I look like a slut. Perfect.

I stuff a couple of dildos and some lube into my toy bag, step out of my apartment, walk up to the corner, and wait for a cab to come by. I don't have to wait long — half a cigarette later, I see a taxi coming up the street. I wave my arm, and the cab driver stops. Actually, he flips an illegal U-turn against a red light, and comes to a stop amid a cloud of burnt-rubber smoke. It must be the way I'm dressed. I get in, and give him the address. A few minutes and a few dollars later, I'm in the warehouse district, South of Market.

I approach the unmarked steel door, every inch of its surface covered with illegible graffiti. I check the address again, and then press the small white button on the right side of the doorway. I wait for a moment, and then the door opens inward, to reveal a twenty-something young man, with a

shaved head and myriad facial piercings, his body completely covered in tribal tattoos. He smiles and welcomes me. I enter, and walk up to the folding table in the foyer, sign the release forms, and step into the main room.

This place is huge — all one room, perhaps two hundred feet deep by seventy or so across — and it's covered with mattresses from wall to wall. Most of the space is already filled with people in various stages of nudity, grouped in clusters of two, three, and more. A powerful sexual energy fills the room.

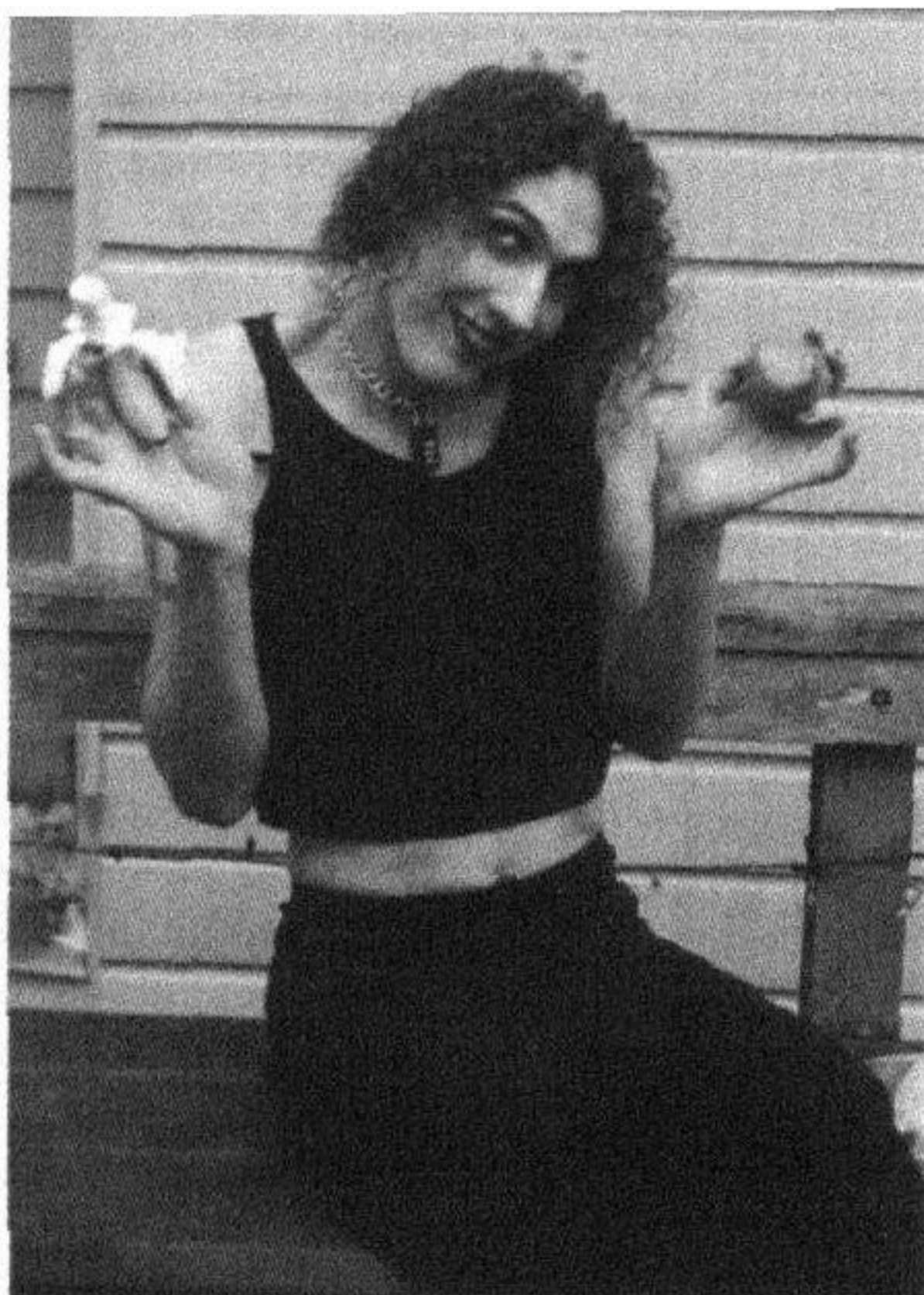
I'm alone, and everyone else seems to be otherwise occupied, but I can still have fun all by myself. I work my way to a corner, where the mattress is covered in decorative sheeting, and throw pillows have been placed against the wall to give the appearance of a bed. I strip down to

my garter belt and stockings, sit down, and open my toy bag. I pull out my favorite toy, a moderately sized green jellied dildo. I roll a condom onto it, squeeze on a dollop of lube, lie back and slip it inside. It feels so good.

I close my eyes, and begin thrusting the joyous little toy in and out of my cunt, harder and faster, while my left hand begins working my clit. I close my eyes and breathe faster, as the tingling inside me grows. I arch my back and begin to moan.

I open my eyes for a moment to see a crowd of men watching me. There's a good size group, about half a dozen; some of them are jerking off. Usually, I am neutral about voyeurs. Right now, I want them there. I smile.





My eyes settle on one man in the group. There's something about him that seems different from the usual crew of men who absorb my sexual energy at parties — he's reflecting it back (which is more rare than it should be, but not unheard of), and beyond that, I've never seen this particular look before.

It's distinct. His eyes convey warmth, and I feel comfortable with him for some reason. I invite him to join me.

His naked body settles next to mine, and his arms begin caressing my breasts and shoulders. I reach over and run my hands through the light gray fur on his chest, down over his belly, to his stiffening rod. He moans, and I begin rhythmically stroking him, jerking him off with my right hand, while my left hand is fishing through my toy bag.

I find a condom, tear open the wrapper, and slip it between my pursed lips. I move my head down, and take him in my mouth, blessing the day that I learned to put on condoms that way.

We fuck six ways till Sunday. I suck him for a while, then climb on top of him. He takes me from underneath, on top, in front, from behind, sitting down, standing up... I have completely lost track of time and I'm enjoying this so much that I don't really give a damn.

Finally, he cums. I hold him for a few minutes; he softens and slips out of me. I tell him he was wonderful.

"You must really love sex," he says.

I laugh. "You're right."

He continues to lie naked on the bed, and when he speaks again, his words throw me for a loop.

"So, are you planning to have surgery?" he asks.

"Surgery for what?" I wonder, almost aloud. I'm baffled: If he thinks I'm MTF, the surgery question has already been answered. If not, what is he thinking?

"No, I'm not planning to have any surgery," I say, curious about where this is leading.

"Do you take hormones, then?" he asks.

Now I'm even more confused. "Just birth control pills." I don't really take the pill, but I want to see where he's going with this. He looks stunned, and a bit pale. I'm still trying to figure out his point.

"You're not FTM?" he asks, hesitantly.

I'm stunned — people have thought me to be a lot of things, but this one's a first. "No, hon," I say, "I'm a woman and I have every intention of remaining one."

"I've always been gay, my whole life," he tells me; "I've never been with a woman before." He doesn't seem to be coping with this well.

"Wow, I'm his first woman," I think to myself, "and he thinks that I'm a FTM drag queen." I contemplate this for a moment, wondering what kind of thought process would lead him there, to that conclusion, above all others. I'm wearing makeup and stockings, after all, and I let him in my cunt. I don't know a single FTM who would do that. Unless he was doing genderfuck!

Of course! If he thinks that I am FTM, then he can fuck my cunt and still be gay. If he thinks I'm not FTM, then he's just had a major revelation, discovered bisexuality, and has to re-think his identity. Either way, he did the same exact thing, and enjoyed it.

I suppose it's what you think you see that counts.

Andrea Michaela-Gonzalez is a tall, twenty-something bisexual femme dyke slut (and unrepentant tranny-chaser) living in San Francisco. She never ceases to be amazed at what people think they see.





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THE LURE OF THE UNDERGROUND

From Argentina:

Here in Argentina, our trans sisters (no brothers visible, yet) have taught us the following, among other things:

- *How to look gorgeous, offer a cup of tea, and be ironic after having spent the whole night at a police station, being beaten and abused by brutes.*
- *How to leave the shadows of shame, self-loathing, and fear of the powers that be — once and for all, proudly and fiercely, hand in hand with anyone who wants to join the parade.*
- *How sex/gender dichotomy is the force suffocating us all, even though some of us can "pass" as conventional. This we haven't learned by reading, but by watching sisters who died because they injected silicone right in their blood, hoping to "pass" and stop being abused.*
- *Where to draw the line as a movement. If we take the middle-class, white gay man of the North as our measuring stick, our work will be done once he can marry his monogamous lover and hold legal custody of their two dogs. But if as our standard we choose that trans sister who will never, ever pass, and strongly commit to go on until she can be safe in the streets and has full access to everything this world offers... then we are very far from any coffee break.*
- *How to do real grass-roots organization. In Argentina, whatever the event be — demonstration, party, conference, you name it — the transgendered are always the biggest group. Their leaders take the time to visit every cheap hotel, every corner where sex workers gather, and talk, talk, talk about why it's important to be seen and heard. They are never too tired, too busy, too important, to listen to still another story of pain and loss and loneliness.*

When do we fail them?

We fail them when we fall prey to the illusion of normalcy: because we "pass," because we are married or too (feminine) (masculine) to be threatening even with a (female) (male) lover, because we are deeply into the closet and nothing and nobody bothers us, their concerns are not ours. After all, being bisexual is just a pastime, just a lifestyle, and we are just like everyone else. Those freaks don't belong in our sanctuary.

They can even "ruin" our small successes. In my country, many gays, lesbians and bisexuals still refuse to march in our pride parades because "too many transvestites are there; they draw too much attention from the media" (as if trans people should be held responsible for the others' choice of the closet).

Many still refuse to support our sisters — who are all sex workers, and as they have no other choice, they can't really know if they would choose it or not — in their struggles because "that is not discrimination based on sexual orientation; those are sex workers' problems and I have nothing to do with that. I pay my taxes." For so long, the trans community has been the chosen recipient for all those wanting to feel cowardly, "higher than thou", "normal" and "accepted" and "safe" in comparison.

And of course, our communities overlap. In my country, the trans community used to be very strict regarding sexual orientation — straight or out — as were bisexual people — only conventional genders allowed as options. As people start to mix and get to know each other better, and to question traditional gender affiliations too, some trans

Trans Sexual Lessons

by Alejandra Sarda

people are allowing themselves to leave the constraints of the "straight in order to be a real woman/man" dictum, while some bis are acknowledging that, for instance, their pleasure in wearing clothes they are not supposed to might mean more than "just a little dirty secret," i.e., a whole new identity for them.

How can we continue helping each other? Talking and listening. Being close. Not just at political occasions, but in our personal lives, too — some people might march with the transgendered because it's politically correct to do so, but would never allow them to mix with their "normal" friends in their homes.

It might sound naive, but I still think the best way to help is allowing oneself to be touched, to be moved by the complex beauty of another human soul, and surrendering to it.

Let's fall in love.

Alejandra Sarda is a long-time queer rights activist and writer. Alejandra lives in Buenos Aires, and was at last report — but hopefully not for long — the only out bisexual in the lesbigaytrans movement in Argentina.



talking about the iSsues no onE's eXpressing

Near the end of a transphobia forum held last December in San Francisco, a petite transwoman named Rachel stood up and raised her hand. Everything that had been said so far was important, she said, and she welcomed the speakers' and audience's commentary on the many issues that arose around transphobia in the bisexual community and gender oppression in the world at large. But what she really wanted to know, more than any of this, she said, was, "Is anyone at all interested in me romantically?"

No one answered her question. "I might be," I thought, "except that you look so much like Amy, the first woman I fell in love with, that it's traumatic even to watch you." I figured this was hardly a productive answer, so I said nothing, but sadly no one else responded. Someone raised a point about how bisexuals could be allies to the transgender community, and the discussion went on in its highly intellectual vein.

Across the room stood Patricia Kevena Fili, local bi and trans activist and the organizer of the transphobia forum. Later she would tell me that her knees shook when she heard this question because more than any other comment, the issue of dating and romance struck at the core of what she felt was wrong with the queer activist attitude towards TS/TG issues: that transgender people were valued allies and interesting objects of intellectual analysis about gender and society, but that few of the folks writing about "gender fuck" were seriously willing

to consider trans people as close friends or potential romantic partners. Unless, of course, you were talking kinky sex and gender exploration at a party or TS-friendly sex club.

But I would not hear this that night, because I was busy avoiding her — I had had a crush on P.K. for nearly nine months, and being the recovering shy person that I am, had convinced myself that there was no way she could possibly be interested in me. I remember meeting her for the first time; I thought she was incredibly beautiful and it was all I could do not to stare into her eyes and fall speechless. But I was afraid she would think I was staring at her because she was TS, and I looked away after saying politely, "Nice to meet you."

Ever since that moment I had handled the situation like I do most of my serious crushes — I avoided her like the plague, kept all conversation to intellectual or activism-related topics, and never, ever, gave her the impression I might actually be attracted to her, because I would hate to impose my sexuality on anyone else the way so many clueless people have imposed their sexuality psychically and physically on me.

Two days after the transphobia forum P.K. and I were standing in the middle of the kitchen at our semi-annual *Anything That Moves* staff retreat. In the midst of the conversation, as she was complimenting me on my outfit and thanking me for all the work I had done for *ATM*, she spontaneously reached up and tucked a fallen strand of my hair back behind my ear. I sucked in my breath and looked

Telling it like it is in the world of bi-trans romance

by Heather Franek

illustrations by Julia Keel



down, as it was all I could do not to grab her and kiss her right there in the middle of the kitchen floor. Moments later I suddenly had to go chop a vegetable. She of course thought she must have crossed a boundary, because she hadn't asked permission to touch my hair, or worse, that I was disgusted by having someone who was transsexual touch me in an intimate fashion. But it never occurred to me in that moment that she might think I was disgusted by her, only that I might somehow offend her if I in any way revealed that I was affected by her light, gentle touch.

It is fascinating to me now that at the time, even in the wake of Rachel's question, it never occurred to me that P.K. might be worried about expressing her attraction to me. After all, she was beautiful, well-liked, passionate about her activism — why would anyone *not* be interested in her? Undoubtedly, I believed naively, she would have all sorts of partners to choose from should she decide to move out of her apparent unattached status. If she was not expressing interest in me, it could only be because I was not interesting to her.

Part of my cluelessness lies in the fact that during my 10 years of bi activism so far, nearly all of my trans colleagues have had partners, often non-trans partners in long-term and/or committed relationships. It never occurred to me to think about the difficulties trans folk face in dating, because all of the trans folk I had close contact with were already "hitched." But part of it has to do with a deep naiveté, a deep lack of understanding that even those of us non-trans folks who are

long-time queer activists have about what it's like to be a transgendered person interacting with a transphobic world.

The first night we actually got up the nerve to flirt with each other, P.K. told me at least three times that she was a pre-operative TS — i.e., that while she was on estrogen, had breasts of her own, and had lived as a woman for some time, she still had her genetically given male-appearing genitalia. The night we had our first date, when we were telling each other Important Facts prior to "officially" getting sexual, she mentioned it again. I didn't understand. "Why does it matter that you're pre-operative?" I thought. "If someone knew they were attracted to you, why would it matter to them what genitalia you have? Isn't the point that they are attracted to you, not your genitalia?" I couldn't understand why she thought my decision whether to become sexual with her would depend on what was under her skirt.

But it did matter.

The first time I slept with P.K., I was delighted to finally be intimate with someone I had been attracted to for so long. At the same time, something deep and subconscious in me got confused at the sight of her fully-developed breasts coupled with her male-appearing genitalia. It's not that I wasn't prepared; I knew when she took off her dress there would be a penis and testicles there, I've seen Loren Cameron's famous photographs, and I've heard a decent amount of detail from

See "S.E.X." (p. 28)

S.E.X. (from p.27)

TS activists about their hormonal transition processes and how being trans affects their lives. But still, when I saw P.K.'s penis, I wanted to call her "he"; naked, she no longer fit in the category that I know as female, even in my feminist, bi activist, trans-positive, gender-fucking community. I needed some other category, something that was neither male nor female, to soothe the confusion of my subconscious brain and somehow make everything right with the world. When she put her clothes back on, my brain went back to "she" and somehow everything was okay again. When she was naked, I was lost in the undefinable.

When she put her clothes back on, my brain went back to "she" and somehow everything was okay again. When she was naked, I was lost in the undefinable.

The realities of MTF biology only increased my deep confusion. P.K.'s penis, while it once made a fine showing as a representative of the spectrum of male human genitalia, no longer acts like a penis; it produces a very lightweight fluid continuously, does not ejaculate, and the fluid smells much more like vaginal fluid than any semen with which I personally have ever come into contact. It responds to touch more like a clitoris, and one day I affectionately named the whole ensemble a "clitina" when we could not figure out which aspects of its behavior were more like a vagina and which were more like a clitoris. Her breasts go through phases as they grow to their full size and shape. Her skin is growing softer and more sensitive, and she is sensitive all over in a way that she never was before she started estrogen. And even though her hormones are not cyclical, she has monthly "periods" which follow her lovers' schedules and in which she has migraines and severe abdominal cramps.

All of these bodily characteristics, however, are not nearly as difficult to absorb as the challenge of interacting with a woman who has been raised as and treated as a man for the first 45 years of her life, and who therefore has inherited a whole lot of the shit that this society bequeathes to men as it beats them up, teaches them to handle disagreements with egocentrism or violence, and asks them to never show vulnerability.

I am keenly aware, every day that I interact with P.K., that I am dating Patrick as much as I am dating Patricia; despite the fact that P.K. had a lifetime female gender identification, Patrick nevertheless inhabited her body for its first 45 years, and he still comes out to handle her affairs when she's stressed, angry, or being criticized or disagreed with. If I

could not talk to P.K. about her "male shit", I could not date her; we have an ongoing conversation about her "boy side" and how this impacts our relationship. Regardless of what Patricia may try to hide, Patrick is not going away just because P.K. has taken charge of the rest of his development.

I could, of course, keep all of this secret and pretend that my subconscious has no problem interacting with someone who does not fit into culturally defined gender roles. This is what most non-trans folk in the bi world do, even some of those who are supposedly writing and theorizing about gender-crossing issues. But to do so is to be dishonest with myself, and to put P.K. in the difficult position of either dealing with my subconscious on an unspoken level, or confronting me on things I'm pretending don't exist. This self-denial among non-trans folks also leads to serious barriers in coalition-building and the potential for relationships between trans and non-trans people.

The issue of gendered upbringing, I think, is one of the most divisive barriers I have seen to open dialogue and coalition-building between trans and non-trans queer people. Many MTFs I have met have grown up with very male ideas about what makes a woman a woman, and adopt these ideals when they make their transitions. I have seen MTFs argue that biceps are not pretty, that any woman who does not like being whistled at on the street is just "uncomfortable with her sexuality," and that other transwomen are "boy-girls" or "she-males" because they don't bother to shave their legs or armpits. Does one have to get rid of one's arm hair and stop exercising in order to be feminine?

By the same token, I've seen FTMs argue that their abusive behavior towards others was an effect of testosterone injections which "cannot be controlled," even though millions of genetic men and adolescent boys manage to control their tempers every day. P.K. gets extreme disapproval in her MTF community for not being "woman enough" to satisfy the MTF Guardians of True Womanhood; for not passing well enough, for not making her voice high enough, for letting it show that she grew up as a man.

I am one of those feminists who at times has questioned whether MTFs should be allowed to participate in women-only events — not because I have essentialist ideas about what constitutes a "woman," for I think of P.K. predominantly as a woman — but because so many MTFs I know have not worked through their male shit enough to really understand what the world is like for genetic or female-reared women. No adult experience can convey what it's like to grow up as female in this society, constantly taught to suppress one's use of power, always compromise, and spend huge amounts of energy placating men whose feelings are hurt because they've been criticized or told no.

The original point of women-only meetings, in a male-dominated, misogynist society, was to bring together a group

of people who shared a particular cultural background, to have time and space to grapple with this legacy and find ways to transform it so that we are finally free to be who we want to be and yet can still value where we came from. Many MTFs simply do not understand this cultural legacy — they have not experienced it, even though they have always internally identified as female. And a few MTFs act outright like spoiled, adolescent males when they don't get what they want or someone says no to their vision of the way women should be or to their view of how the world should operate. I do not interact with P.K. the way I would with a woman raised-female. Nor do I particularly want to, because this is not who P.K. is.

The issue of passing is vitally important, though, because only trans people who pass are safe from the incredible violence that this misogynist, homophobic, transphobic world directs at people who don't fit standard dualistic categories of gender and sexuality. I have been an anti-violence trainer for 10 years, and during that same time I have also been a low-paid social justice activist who, for economic and social reasons, has lived in neighborhoods afflicted with a lot of violence. I have worked in high security prisons and defended children against abusive parents; I have lived across the street from a house that ran an underground business in guns and ammunition in a neighborhood with a significant history of street warfare. Yet never, in all of my years of walking streets alone at night and handling difficult situations, have I been as frightened as I was the first night I simply rode home with P.K. on the bus.

And nothing even happened. We took BART to Oakland-12th Street, and stood around under a bank waiting for the #40. Some men stared at us, but then went back to their conversations. No one approached us or threatened to do violence. Yet as we stood there holding hands, I wondered despite my belief in being 'out' if holding her hand was putting her in danger, a danger which was certain and immediate and which I could not singlehandedly stop if it

were to impose itself upon us. I have the names of trans-friendly people I know who are involved with emergency services and law enforcement memorized — Mark Silver, Scott Cozza, CUAV and its 24-hour referral line. "Is it possible," I wonder while walking down the street late at night with P.K. — a street I would not be afraid to walk down alone — "to call 911 and ask for 'the ambulance with Mark Silver in it?'" And in perhaps the most telling self-revelation of all, I find myself hoping that P.K. will get her genital surgery soon — because "at least then", I think, "they'll only rape her, not murder her." What an expression of overwhelming violence and a single human's inability to stop it — "at least they'll only rape her."

In the meantime I go on happily dating my sweetie, arguing about what movie to see tonight and how much water should be used to properly cook *al dente* pasta. I still have not seen her watching a basketball game when her favorite team is losing, but she says, "It's not a pretty sight," and that "I may not want to know."

On a day-to-day basis, she's just P.K., a tall thin redheaded Irish ex-Catholic who likes movies, dancing, and snuggling in bed. It so happens that she's also MTF TS, and I still can't figure out whether my fundamentalist Christian sister is going to be disappointed I'm dating someone in a dress, or happy I'm dating someone with a penis.

Regardless of the end result, I wouldn't have it any other way.

Heather Franek is an anti-violence and diversity trainer and Minnesota chauvinist who also acts as the Business and Organizational Development Manager of Anything That Moves Bisexual Community Resources. She and P.K. Fili made it into bed on January 5, 1998, and are still there, thinking about what you're thinking as you read this article. All similarities to real persons or events implied in this article are purely and entirely intentional.

Jack loves Jill and Jill loves Jack
And sometimes they both love Jim.
So condoms protect all three of these lives
And all lovers of her and him. And him.

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The Joker Is Wild

Changing Sex + Other Crimes of Passion

by Max Wolf Valerio



Photo by Maria Elena Boyd

4 Shorts by Monika Treut
FEMALE MISBEHAVIOR

[illegible]

Transsexuality and bisexuality both occupy heretical thresholds of human experience. We confound, illuminate and explore border regions. We challenge because we appear to break inviolable laws. Laws that feel "natural." And quite possibly, since we are not the norm or even average, it is likely that one function we have is to subvert those norms or laws; to break down the sleepy and unimaginative law of averages.

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The Joker Is Wild (from p.33)

Transsexual science fiction writer Rachel Pollack has often called transsexual identity an experience of *revelation*. I like to call it *a crime of passion*, a moving target for bores and narrow-minded fuss-buckets, a necessary and inevitable subversion of the quotidian law of averages. After all, changing sex is a nearly savage act of body modification occupying a charged realm far beyond our culture's current obsession with "safety."

Transsexuals and bisexuals can both celebrate the capacity of human beings to experience and claim revelation. The bisexual breaks the rule that you must choose between man and woman; the transsexual violates the rule that you must be recognizably and distinctly either a man or a woman your entire life from birth to death. The idea that people carry within them the capacity and the desire to radically alter their biological sex and social gender — or the ability to love and lust after both men and women, or one sex then the other — is experienced by many as heresy. The willful claiming of a unique and perplexing revelation.

Along with *Anything That Moves*, I celebrate the human capacity and right to change, rediscover, reinvent and continuously experience revelation; to reevaluate and to renounce any aspect of myself that is no longer authentic; to live beyond my own fears and preconceived notions as well as those of the people around me. Without a doubt, anything can be revealed at any moment. Without a doubt, anything usually is. And although I am not actually bisexual at this time, **I claim the right to change my mind.**

In millennial culture, the Joker's Wild

— Mark Dery, *World Art*
(Spring 1996)

I watch myself in the mirror, shirt off, pants slung down past my hip bones. The scars are fading and the contour of my chest looks tight. My pecs have definition, and the nipples and areolas are well placed, not too high and not too low.

My areolas are small like the inside of a nickel; they appear to be the right

size. When I turn to the side, there's a slight indentation between my pecs, muscles defined, a symmetry. If I work out I'll get more cut. When I do the results show right away. That's different than before, when I was a woman.

An old girlfriend once remarked that most men tell war stories — "Back when I was in the war..." — whereas I would say, "Back when I was a woman..."

For 32 years I lived inside a woman's body. Although I resisted femaleness on and off throughout my life, I learned to speak the language of women, to pass unseen among them. I was both part of their world and apart from it, alien and peer, feeling male inside yet living the life of a woman. I learned a lot. What I learned is still with me, even as I transform, even as my emotional moorings shift and my body recreates itself from female to male.

I'm an agent provocateur, behind the lines, a translator.

This is really the unthinkable thing, a sex change. The clinics and doctors don't try to persuade you to have one — they'll do anything to dissuade you.

People like me have always existed, in every era, on every continent. In some cultures, we were allowed to assume the roles and lifestyles of our preferred gender, but now we can go further than we ever could before. Because of the discovery and synthesis of the sex hormones estrogen and testosterone, which induce the development of primary and secondary male and female sexual characteristics, I can do more than simply live in the world in the male role. I can actually become chemically and hormonally male and transform physically into a man.

My life is one of the extravagant experiments of the 20th century.

You never know who you are talking to. You never know what you will do someday, and what you are capable of.

Changing sex is an act of subverting nature's implacable authority, of uncovering and displaying nature's hidden cacophony, its subtext of sabotage and dissolution. Transsexual men are *real*. Nature is an evolving paradigm of conflicting tendencies and escalating discoveries; transsexuals hold a funhouse mirror up to nature. We reimagine identity, sexuality, biological sex and gender. We get to live out our childhood dreams.

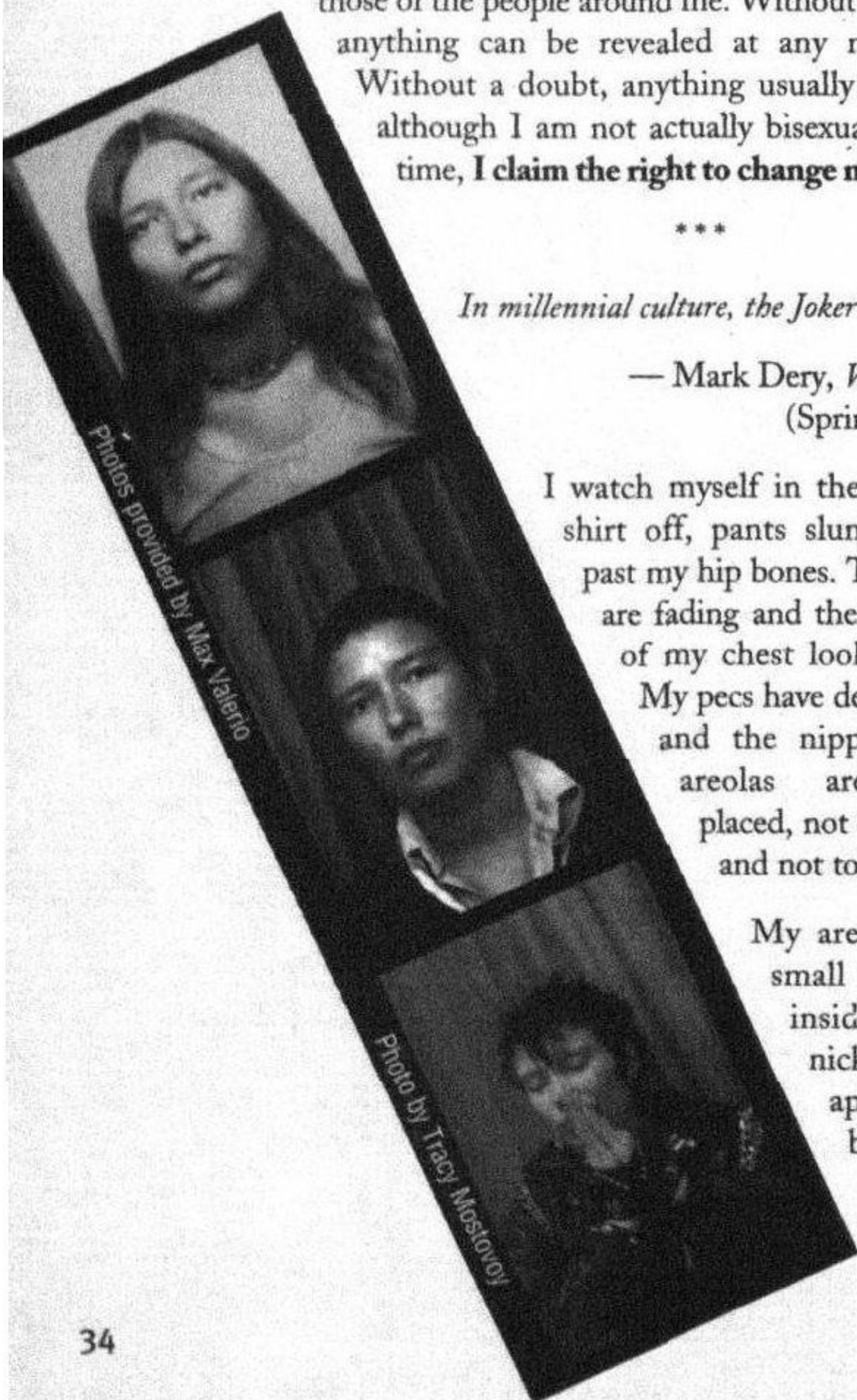
I bathe in the delightful and sensuous machinery of sexual differentiation.

I look good in the rude perfume of decaying boundaries.

I've gone through a number of rites of passage. Some have taken me by surprise. Although not subject to sexual harassment on the street any longer, I've been threatened with explosive physical violence more times as a guy than as a woman.

I live my life inside an ongoing paradox.

Ambiguity and peril.



Post-modernism suits me. And sorcery...

A shaman has three marks to indicate that he or she has completed initiation: scars, a new name, a secret.

In many cultures transsexuals, transgendered and intersexed people were shamans and tricksters — jokers.

I have donated my body to science.

The joker is wild!

Transsexuality is a phenomenon. Awesome with cloaked paradoxes. Unknowable. Ranging far from accepted cultural beliefs and practices. It instigates re-examinations of identity as well as the methods and practices that enable us to know or perceive identity.

Identity as will, as having the agency to restructure the very body it inhabits.

Transsexuals are agent provocateurs on the edges of a culture hurtling headlong into a century where technology will interface on an escalating basis with our bodies and consciousness. We are the furthest, most extreme expression of manipulation of the body, almost as though that body, that human stretch of flesh, were a piece of plastic, or some other nearly synthetic, malleable substance. We restructure our glands, our body fluids, skin, nerves and genitals. Our lives are recovered by science, the oblique point of reference for an expanding arc of transformation.

We are thieves of technology for the will of an inscrutable and delicious fate. Some call it choice; others, destiny.

How many people have had the experience of living both as a man and as a woman? Of experiencing the hormonal surges, of wearing the skin and muscles, the shifting moods, the social, spiritual and historical onus of both sexes?

Because we have lived the impossible, what was previously only dreamed about, we must demand to be known and understood as precursors, explorers, as well as brave, poignantly human men and women, just folks. We are prophets of a richly complex net of perceptions, dialogues; radically violent instrumentalities of transformation concerning sex, gender, body modification and identity. Ancient archetypes whisper or sing to us that we are connected to archaic, abiding images of man and woman in our essence, even from within our seeming contradictions. We intensify the archetypes of maleness and femaleness in order to see through them, to live past them, to fully and completely reconfigure their meaning.

By becoming a man I became all men and developed a new compassion for maleness and femaleness as it is lived in this culture. What previously appeared to be sexist posturing or empty role-playing took on the texture and vulnerable com-

plexities of a passionate panoply, richly lived, real. *Real*, as in abiding, reasonable, rooted in experience that is lived, not conspired, not counterfeit. A reality with contradictions, genuine feeling and insoluble, although difficult, meaning.

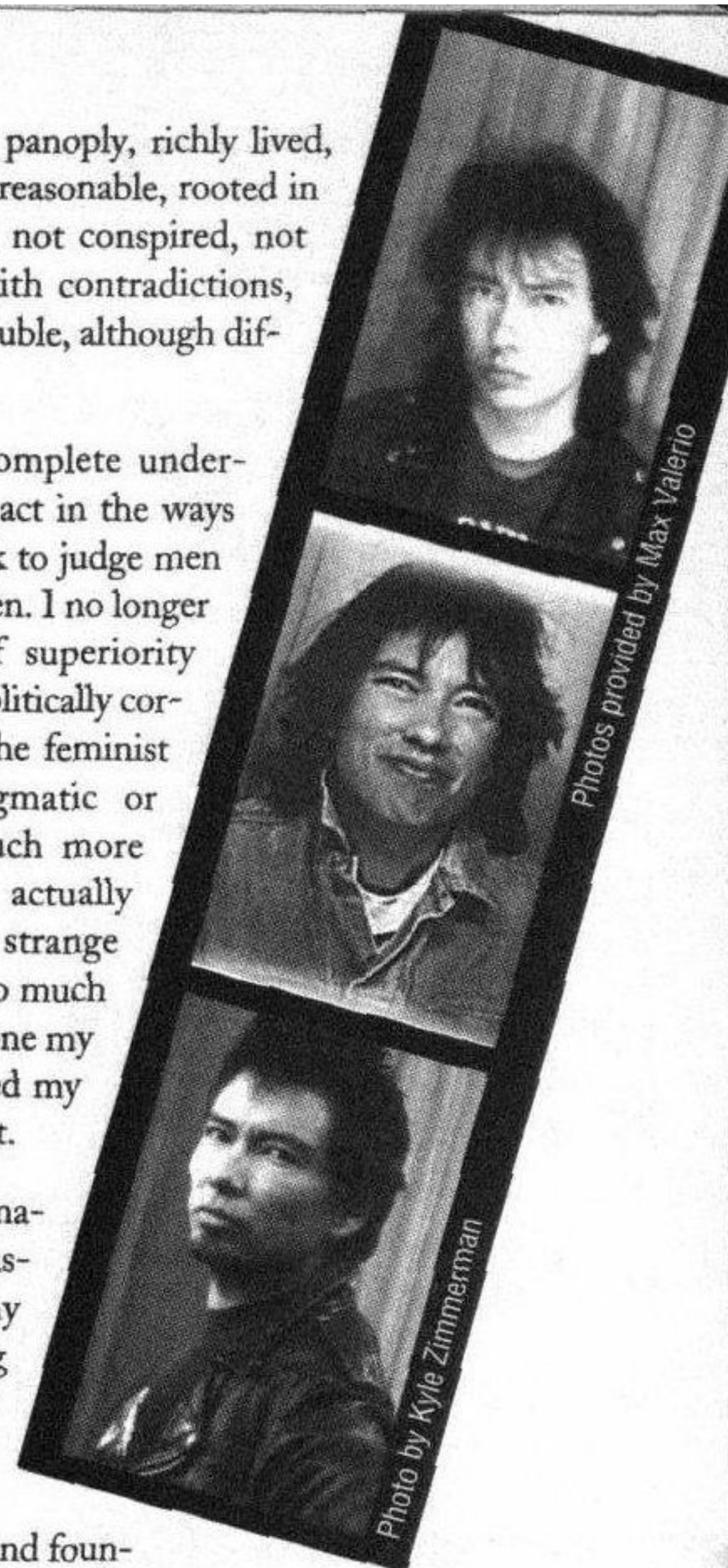
I've come to a more complete understanding of why people act in the ways they do. I'm not as quick to judge men or, for that matter, women. I no longer have subtle feelings of superiority because of being on a "politically correct" side (in my case, the feminist side). I'm not as dogmatic or defensive. I feel so much more human, although I'm actually more spectacular and strange than ever before. I feel so much freedom now that I've done my deepest will and shattered my old life in the course of it.

Because of my transformation, I've had to increasingly re-examine my assumptions concerning sexuality, the differences between men and women, the social and biological constructions and foundations of gender identity, the motivating impulses constructing culture.

This is one of the great opportunities that this transition brings to transsexual people, if we are equal to taking it on: Freedom, knowledge, and the ability to participate in mystery. The mystery that our lives become once we have changed our sex and eluded all expectations of how and who we are; and the mystery that we find the world to be, as we take part in it from the vantage point of complete strangers, alien to and yet intimately familiar with each sex, knowing that just as we are not simple, nothing and no one else is either. The world is a stretching, shaking net wild with biologically rooted instinct, flashes of intuitive, abstract thought forms encoding and creating culture, inchoate dream sequences, yearnings that search and destroy all assumptions, all dogmatic, wishful thinking. It's a jungle and we're in it, alive with the certainty of hounds in a war zone.

I have changed my sex. Future generations of transsexuals will only do it more thoroughly as biotechnology becomes more refined. The previously unthinkable range of that transformation has actually wed us more deeply to the rest of humanity.

See "The Joker Is Wild" (p. 36)



The Joker Is Wild (from p.35)

On the margins, the periphery, is where the middle expanses are most easily viewed.

Being transsexual is not a unilateral political movement, a religion or a cult group. It is not my job to educate society or change it to some utopian, and possibly dystopian, glob of multi-gendered thingness. I believe that transsexuals must continue to fight for our civil rights, for affordable, competent health care, for the right to live as ourselves with respect and dignity.



Changing sex is radical because it is extreme, far-fetched, and magical, not because of any imagined alliance to any particular political ideology. I am not interested in a sanctimonious "movement", where being "transgendered" becomes a self-referential lifestyle or is tethered to an ideologically arch set of political values.

I'm interested in inquiry, imagination, the transmutation of elemental psychic energies. I don't have an ax to grind in terms of making everyone give up some "bi-polar" gender system. Hey — I like being a guy and I like it when women enjoy that and like being women. The man/woman dynamic turns me on big time. Boy/girl, like animals rutting. Basic. Old fashioned. Bi-polarized...

Politics of the left and right bore me, and strike me as short-sighted. Too much bad art, too many dead bodies. Chairman Mao, Stalin and Hitler had a lot in common. Fidel Castro jails queers and writers. These people thought that they were controlling people's thoughts, bodies and destinies for the good of all. They believed in a totalization of identity, a structured utopia.

I'm in league with nature's lucidity and hunger, with Blake's devil whose "energy is eternal delight," as well as the primeval, mischevious Id that drives Pan to manhandle and seduce any sex goddess you can think of with his big, hairy hands and his pipes. I'm in league with technology and big dreams that ignite people with hope and pleasure — the future, an escalation of biological invention we can't yet imagine.

Freedom, brisk and invigorating. Not a Hallmark experience. Not a therapy. Nothing trite or sentimental, nothing preachy or unctuous. Nothing so easy, safe, or formulaic. No comfort zones masquerading as truth.

I'm searching for an unpredictable, body-wrenching experience.

Max Wolf Valerio is a poet, writer and performer who has appeared in many documentaries, including the "Max" short in Female Misbehavior (by Monika Treut) and You Don't know Dick: Courageous Hearts of Transsexual Men (by Candace Schermerhorn and Buster Cam). He will also be appearing in Monika Treut's up-and-coming documentary on gender called The X/Y Files.

In the meantime, Max is finishing up his long-delayed memoir, The Joker is Wild! — Changing Sex and Other Crimes of Passion and hopes to have it published as soon as he can find a new publisher who will allow him to be as dangerous as is necessary. This chapter is the prologue. Max has also written a chapbook, Animal Magnetism, is working on at least one other book of poetry, and envisioning a novel, The Church of the Transsexual Jesus.

This article originally appeared as "Transsexuality, Science and Prophecy" in the anthology Transgender Care (Temple University Press, 1997; written and edited by Gianna E. Israel, with Donald E. Tarver II, MD).

Report from the United Kingdom: Bisexuality & Transgenderism

by Kevin Lano

In contrast to Ellen DeGeneres' comment that "I could have sex with a man again, but obviously he'd have to be a fairly feminine man," many bisexuals still seem attracted to the polarized opposites of gender. They maintain a dual attraction for both traditional male and female ideals of appearance and behavior — for conventional masculinity and femininity solely. This isolates the many people who don't fit into these categories, in particular, transgendered (and other) individuals who don't want to identify as either male or female.

I see the radical aspects of bisexuality as including a rejection of the traditional extremes of masculinity and femininity: the domineering, aggressive, macho man focused on power and material success and emotionally dependent on women, and the passive, appearance-obsessed woman. I don't want relationships with such stereotyped identities, or in such a framework, no matter what their professed sexuality is. I would hope that the bi community could provide a space for alternatives for mainstream gender models and a diversity of attraction to be supported.

However, in the UK bi community, discussion of gender and gender politics — let alone action — has in recent years been very limited. Mixed workshops on feminism at the main bi conferences always seemed to generate a lot of animosity and argument, with women and some progressive men trying to contest ignorant or straightforwardly bigoted attitudes from other men. Such workshops ceased to be held several years ago for this reason.

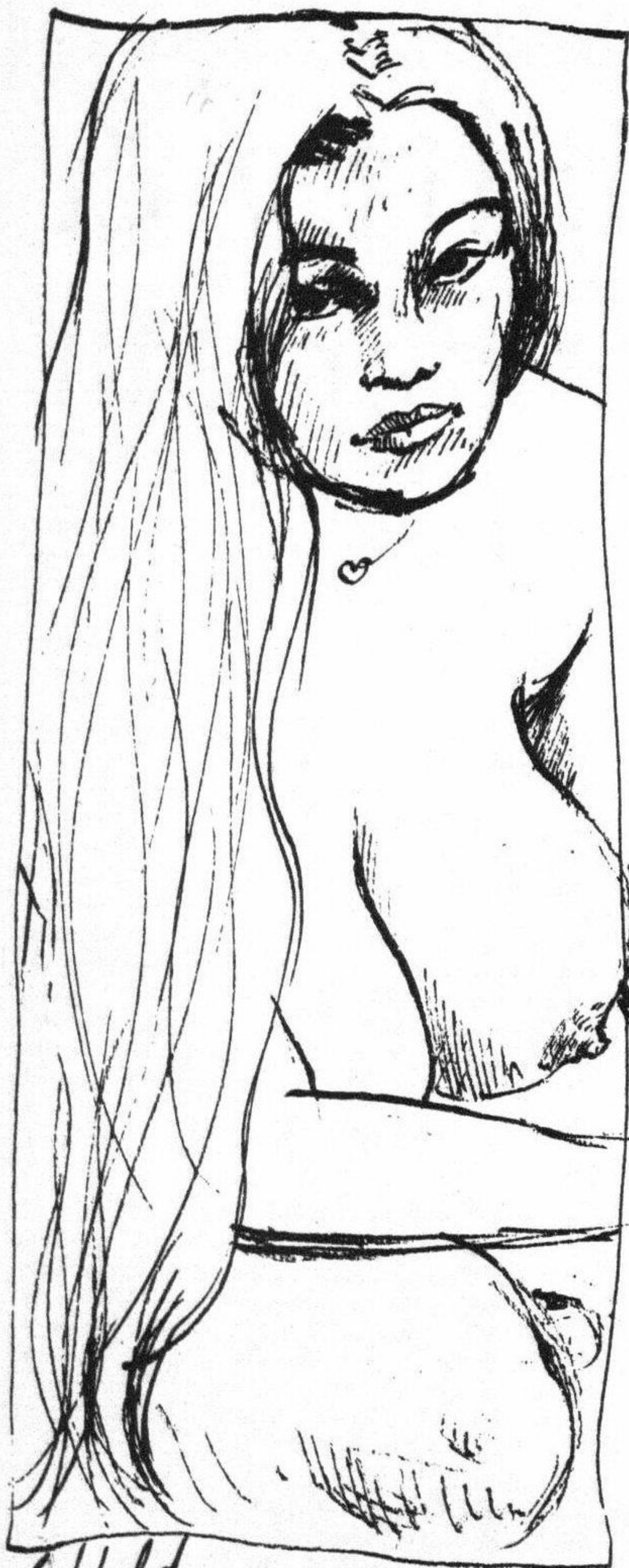
The bi community has also confronted the issues around transsexuality and transgenderism in a rather haphazard way. From the earliest years of the bi community, significant numbers of TV/TS and transgender people have always been involved in it. The bi community served as a kind of refuge for people who felt excluded from the established lesbian and gay communities. But at conferences, a recurrent issue which

caused strong feelings was whether ex-male TS or TG people could share women's space, particularly crash sleeping space. Many women felt unsafe around these individuals, and demanded separate space be kept for women born as women. Current conference policy is to allow TS people who have lived in their new gender for at least six months to use spaces set aside for that gender. At the same time, the London bi women's group has been very accepting of the several ex-male TS women who have joined it.

Do the bisexual and TG/TS communities belong together, or should they now separate? Clearly they do need separate organizations and social spaces, but they could also benefit from more significant links and discussions of joint issues than has occurred so far. Bisexuals need to question how their attractions to conventional male and female images may be supporting the system of gender polarity that oppresses many TG and TS people. Bisexual organizations also need to have a consistent policy towards TS and TG people, one which doesn't exclude and isolate the increasing number of people who don't want to 'pass' as either male or female in (what should be) radical and progressive spaces.

On a positive note, the bi and transgender working groups for UK Pride '98 are intending to work together to coordinate their tents and events for this festival to produce a more effective overall presence. Hopefully this can be built on in years to come. Perhaps, given the dropping of the terms "bisexual" and "transgender" from the mission statement of "Lesbian and Gay" Pride, the groups could even coordinate a separate "Bisexual and Transgendered" Pride?

Kevin Lano is a UK gay and bisexual activist, involved in the bi community including organisation for UK Pride and in safer-sex education. He is a co-editor of Breaking the Barriers to Desire (Five Leaves Press, 1995) and Bisexual Horizons (Lawrence and Wishart, 1995), and has had short stories published in several magazines.

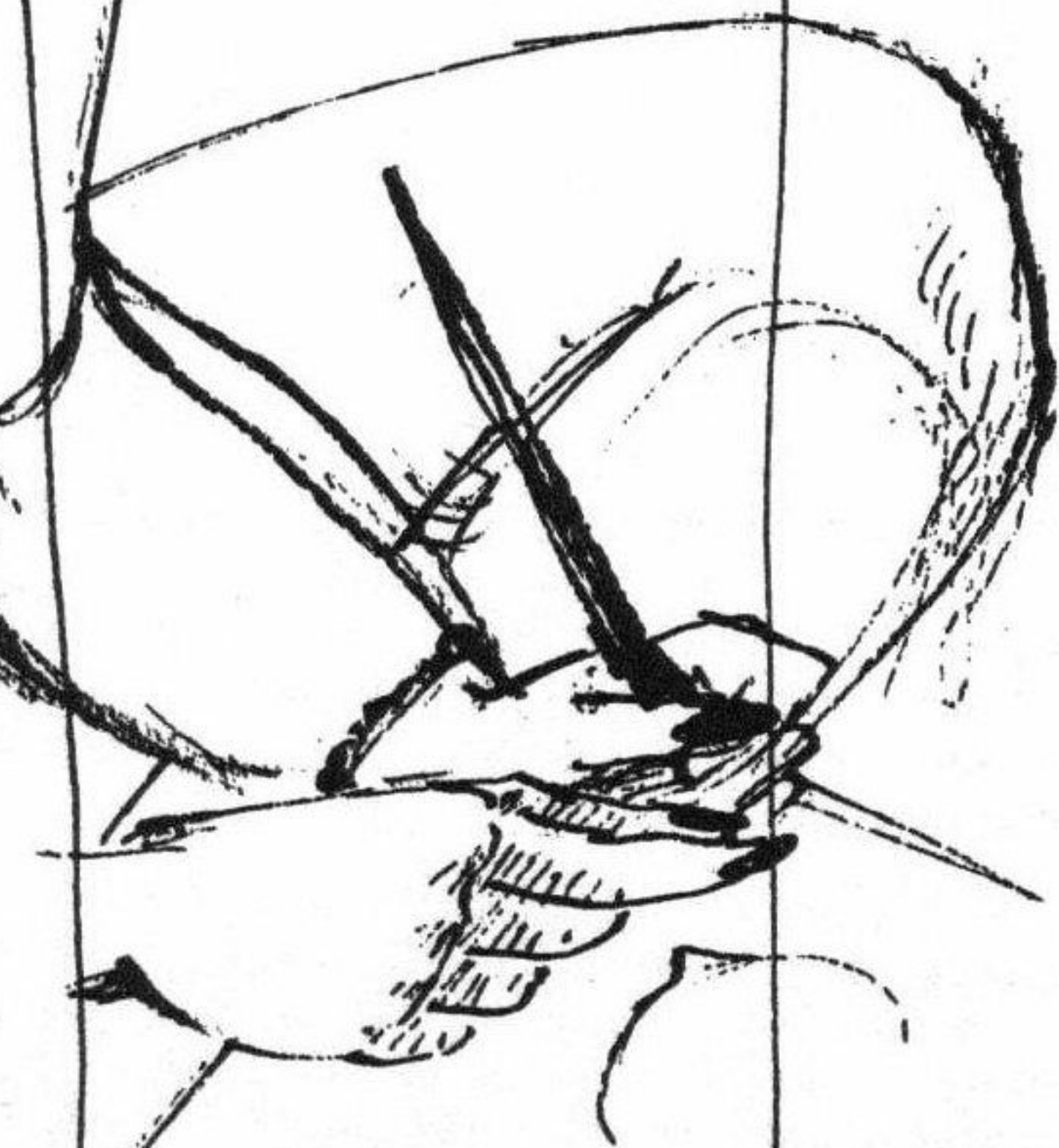


G. Wald.

Finding Fantasy

by
Cody
Dare

art by
Gabi Wald



16.01.97

"So, what is your dark fantasy?" Allen looked right at me as he asked the question. I shrank back and stared at my cup of coffee. My mind, normally spilling with thoughts, ideas and pictures, was still as a rock. I closed my eyes and tried to conjure up something lusty and offbeat. All I could think of was my old teenage fantasy: I lie in bed, asleep and beautiful. A man comes in and is so taken with me, he simply must have me. Through his touch and admiration, he persuades me, lures me toward sex. But this was not a dark fantasy — it was white-laced and demure, the Southern girl who wasn't allowed to ask for it, begging someone to pry apart her legs.

"I don't know what my fantasy is," I stammered.

"What would you do with me if you could have your way? If you could do anything with me?" Allen asked.

His touch on my arm felt electric and confusing. When Allen had said he really wanted to get to know me, I felt flattered and curious. Why did this handsome, brilliant, sexy man want to know me? Why, when I already had a relationship with a wonderful man, did I agree to meet Allen for coffee?

"I know you must have fantasies," Allen said.

Suddenly, I felt pale and lacking, a kindergartener asked to discuss cosmology. How could I translate my quiet sexuality into some longing labyrinth, where I could intrigue Allen with the dark pinioning of my intricate mind?

I asked my friend Sandy for guidance in exploring my darker side. She took me to an old theater with boarded-up windows. A voluptuous woman stood on the stage, wearing a stethoscope, black vinyl corset and mini-skirt. The old wooden boards shuddered under her spiked heels.

"Water sports can be a lot of fun, if you take precautions and act safely," she said. "For instance, you don't want to get urine in the eyes. Or in any open wounds."

I squeezed shut my eyes and pressed my knees even closer together. The woman in front of us was taking notes. Two men beside me were tape recording the lecture. I looked around the dingy space. Fifty people listened intently to interesting ways to safely piss on — *vs. piss off* — the one you love.

"Be sure to stay for the sharing circle," the woman said, after the lecture was over and the applause died down. "And by the way, I'm looking for a submissive man to do housework. I promise I'll punish him good if he doesn't get everything spic and span."

Maybe that was what I really wanted: some guy to help around the house. As we pulled up chairs to create a circle,

I examined the crowd to see if anyone looked like the domestic type.

"Share anything you want to," the facilitator, a willowy redhead holding a whip, said.

My throat constricted. I moved my folding chair closer to Sandy's.

"Don't worry. You don't have to say a thing," Sandy whispered.

A blond woman wearing riding clothes spoke first. She had the brisk no-nonsense look of a corporate trainer or an advertising executive.

"My name's Donna and this is my personal submissive," she said, putting her hand on the shoulder of the gentle-looking man next to her. "Every morning, even before he goes to the bathroom or brushes his teeth, he comes into our room bearing our sacred cup. I pee into this cup and he drinks my urine. We feel this is a sacred practice."

I bit my lip, feeling nausea grip me at the thought of drinking urine.

The personal submissive spoke next. "I feel honored to drink my mistress's urine," he said. His hands were long and he had flecks of blue paint on his arms. If he walked past me on the street, I would think of him as an artist, someone I would like to know.

"I'm searching for a woman who will let me worship her feet," said a man with straight black hair and a reedy voice. "Once, I had a woman who let me paint her toenails. When I asked her to do it again, she thought it was weird." He looked down at his hands.

"I'll tell you what I want most." The handsome man with the impeccable double-breasted suit had radio voice that commanded attention. He cracked his knuckles and glanced behind him. "What I want..."

He glanced around again and leaned forward, his voice tentative and small. "You see, I get off by being deprived. Really, anything works — food deprivation, water deprivation, strangulation, they're all really turn-ons. I just can't get anyone to stay around long enough to really deprive me." He pressed the back of his hand against his eyes, then stared ahead.

"I want a man who really knows how to dominate," said the woman who had lectured. "Not just another guy who likes to give spankings, but a man who knows how to train his submissive."

A couple of the other women nodded.

See "Finding Fantasy" (p. 40)



Finding Fantasy (from p.39)

"I want a beautiful blonde to vomit on me," said a man with restless legs. "Does anyone know where I can go? I can't get no one to do it for me."

I could hardly breathe when it was my turn to speak.

"I want to understand the dark side of myself," I said, my voice shaky.

The personal submissive nodded. "Yes," he said.

Did the meeting bring up any fantasies?" Sandy asked as we drove home.

"No," I said. My stomach was knotted. I was still sunk in the confusion of being with people that society, and maybe even me, would label "deviant." I tried to imagine looking in the eyes of a potential lover and saying, "I am most aroused when you piss on me." I tried to imagine revealing to a per-

son I'd dated for six months that what I truly craved is a chance to be tied up and left for days, without water or food.

I took a deep breath. Now, safe in the car, I realized I had heard people say the "unspeakable." I felt their pain and their desire. And I wondered if I could be so brave.

Reading *Damage*, I was totally fascinated by the story of a respectable man who was so seized with desire that he threw away his career and family. His story haunted me.

Then I realized, *that* was my fantasy. I wanted to throw myself heedlessly after passion, without thinking or analyzing or considering the needs and feelings of others. I wanted my body to lead me.

Would it lead me to despair? Probably. To regret and sadness? Probably. All these years, I had corseted and managed my desire. Now, I wanted to know it.

My fantasy felt careless and strong, like kicking in the door and taking what I wanted, without offering to share. I imagined keeping the sweet butterfly shell of my life, continuing to function in my work and in my other relationships, while secretly creating an intricate warren of sexual assignments. The throbbing current of that underground self, the hushed pulse, the muffled whisper, would be raised to a crash and a roar.

Several nights later, I saw Allen at a party.

"I've been waiting to hear from you. Did you think of a fantasy?" he asked me. His presence was a matador's cape, flung wide in invitation and challenge.

"Yes."

"Call me tomorrow. I want to be alone with you when I hear it."

I had stayed away from Allen because I was deeply in love with another, a man who truly cared for me. My lover was smart and interesting, sexually exciting and adventuresome. Allen was a car crash without seatbelts, a step toward the me who belonged in that circle: deviant, wild, untitled. Allen was "asking for *it*."

I picked up the telephone and wondered what I would say.

Cody Dare is a swimmer, dreamer and gatherer of people and ideas. Her work has appeared in Loving More Magazine and New Age Journal.

THAT WOMAN

BY CAROL GUESS
PHOTO BY AMY CONGER

you rarely mention, the one I know
you lunch with often, that nameless woman
(pale hair, pallor, as I imagine her)
is the one who worries me. Not
the namable shes you chat about.
I've set aside minutes (hours — admit it)
for hating her: your desire
welling like a bruise beneath thin pants,
her smirk, your dance
around my small demands: ring me up
tonight the obstacle
that makes adultery worthwhile.
Hate? Did I say... Miles
too strong, should be reserved for rapists,
not flirty girls who can't
keep hands and vowels in check.
After all, haven't I smiled
endearingly at someone's ring?
She's nothing, but nothing is what
they've called the sweet, slick haven
between women's legs for centuries;
nothing is also what makes me mysterious.

What happened to trust, to fine romance?
Long distance doesn't dim the chance,
you've said, of this candle we call us
staying lit. But lit brings heat with it.
And something worse: I've let myself forget
it could've been my hands first,
two different voices cooing, give and take,
two women binding breath to make
a beacon, light illuminating short.
It could've been you in the lighthouse,
me pleasing her as I've pleased
women before, but instead your chatter
leaves me full of some wife's venom,
mistaking possessiveness for emotion,
having forgotten in the heat of you
that I know women's bodies, too.
Next time I visit, I'll ask to meet her.
Meaning, Let me see her, let her become
a woman, human. Not this stinging dust,
blinding me to what she and I
might be outside your lust.



moving from a lesbian separatist state

by kaseja laurine wilder
photographs provided by the author

**in 1982, i came out in eugene, oregon as
a feminist, as a witch, and as a lesbian.**

i quickly took on the lesbian uniform (short hair, flannel shirts and comfortable shoes) and the lesbian code (anti-pornography, anti-isms, anti-patriarchy). i memorized holly near and alix dobkin. i went to the bar every week on thursdays (womyn's night). i attended "womyn take back the night" marches and organized womyn-only poetry readings. i learned how to be a strong womon by means of lesbian feminist politics.

i realized i was an incest survivor, a painful, revealing, and liberating process. i was molested by family members and friends of the family from the time i was six months old until i was sixteen. my lover at the time and i did a lot of work on our incest material together. this led to my doing ritual healing work and was a part of many powerful healing circles. i found safe places to be a womon and to talk about the sexual abuse in my family, or cry about it, or generally just be in a funk about it. i had what i called my incest survivor days.

i let my relationships with the men in my family go when they wouldn't deal with the incest dynamic. for a variety of reasons, my mother and i decided to minimize our contact as well. i was free to focus entirely on lesbian community and on healing from childhood trauma. i began leaning toward lesbian separatism.

in 1989 i moved to womyn's land in southern oregon and stayed for three years. i lived with no phone, no electricity, and no running water — at least not in my space (the main house had cold running washing water, but it wasn't good for drinking). we were all lesbian with one notable exception, and we all identified as separatist to varying degrees.

it felt good to focus on womyn, do healing work with womyn through support groups and workshops, to do ritual regularly. it was wonderful to feel my feet solid on the earth as i chopped wood for my fires, hauled water for my washing, did gardening, road work, and fundraising with my sisters. there was something unspeakably powerful about bonding with a group of womyn focused on a common goal, healing, working the land, putting on a workshop. that expanded feeling of being vitally connected to all that is female, including being intrinsically connected to mother earth, is probably the most intense spiritual place i've ever been. this feeling was plumbed deeper by the womyn-only environment.

this was not a one-time event, but an energy i lived in pretty much every day. in some sense this has become an intrinsic part of my being. while it's true that separatism closes doors, it also allowed this deeply spiritual feeling to take root in me, among other things. i was focused on womyn, and on what was positive about being with womyn, though many non-separatists viewed this in the negative and wanted me and my community to justify our position in closing men out of our lives. i felt my energy — all lesbian energy — had to be spent on womyn so that it wouldn't get sloughed out of our small and precious system to be "wasted" on men.

i suppose this energy scarcity came from feeling that there wasn't really enough space for us in the world as lesbians, and that we had to guard our space carefully, including our psychic space. once, i remember sharing intimately with a

womon in our community and afterward someone told me there was a man in her life that she slept with on a regular basis. i felt betrayed because i assumed that she wasn't a lesbian, or at least that she wasn't a real lesbian. i didn't want to be sharing deeply with her if she was intimate with men. to this day, i still don't know what her relationship with this man in her life was, but my assumptions surely left me feeling hurt and alienated.

i no longer believe in seeing energy as a closed system, but at the time it worked to make us a family, and solid with each other. like family there were arbitrary rules that someone else made up and we all followed them so we could be a part of the group. it definitely has its drawbacks. but i really felt a part of my community, and that was a wonderful thing. i reveled in it.

about six months before leaving womyn's land, I started being lovers with a wonderful womon who is still my lover today. at the time, she happened to be in love with a womon who was in a relationship with a man. I was curious about this womon solely on the basis of my lover caring for her so much. we met and i began one of the most important friendships in my life. i was not very open to her male lover, but he was gentle with me, as well as respectful and generous. i grew to respect and admire and eventually love him as well.

i was able to see my one male friend as an isolated incident for a long time, but by 1995 i had to admit a door was opening as i began to explore more deeply my relationship to gender and male energy. i was still pretty closed to men, though i was starting to have a sneaking suspicion it was aversion that covered up attraction. i realized i wanted male energy in my life; meaning appropriate male energy, and that's what really had me checking in my separatist card. i came to know that i was not indifferent to my dad's inability to provide a loving male influence while i was growing up. i was sad. i grieved my dad and his lack of ability to love me then or now. i saw that there was more to men than just the abuse i had grown up with and i started to seek male energy on a spiritual level. i'm not even sure i knew what "male energy" meant, but i knew i wanted to know more. i had no idea how i was going to incorporate men into my life, but i had opened and i could feel a difference.

i guess it should be no surprise that i began looking for it among the womyn i knew. i started to recognize male energy in my womyn friends; butch women, women who acted "like

men" or were mistaken for men in society. some of my exploration was sexual in nature; i talked to "dykes with dicks" and i let some of those dykes fuck me with their dicks. i even tried the energy on myself. i made myself a soft pack and occasionally wore it in public enjoying the confused looks of people as they checked out my feminine features and my masculine-looking basket.

in the midst of all this searching i had a lover tell me she thought she was FTM (female to male transsexual) and despite the personal work i was doing, i felt extremely betrayed and upset. i couldn't understand why anyone would want to be a man. i needed to know more. so i read newsletters and articles, anything that i could find. i read *stonebutch blues* by leslie feinberg and kate bornstein's *gender outlaw*. i continued to be intimate with this lover, and he has helped me immensely in dealing with my own issues around gender. i really appreciate his willingness to continue to work with me in spite of my initial transphobic responses.

my relationship to men in general is still pretty tentative. i do have a few very valuable men in my life and i'm still looking for men i can be really intimate with. in this search, i am not only dealing with negative reactions from some of my lesbian friends, but it's also proving difficult for me to find men that i can relate to. part of the problem is that most of my friends do not have very many, if any, male friends, so just meeting men is hard. in addition, we've all been hurt in our lives and sexism is real; these wounds can make it difficult for me to find the connections i'm seeking. as i find men to be intimate with, i want to be very sure i don't forget the strength that i've gained during my time in womyn-only environments.

there's another element in this for me. i have become pretty disillusioned by the lesbian community. i thought i would find

See "Separatist State" (p. 43)



kaseja's lexicon

1. *capitalization*. i don't capitalize the pronoun i because i don't like the way it sets the personal off from the other, for instance, "I" am not more important than "you." i don't use capitalization in general, i feel it interrupts flow. i like to think of most of my writing as from the spirits, like the flow of the wind or ebb of the tide; flowing in, sliding out. i feel capitalization interferes with this elemental movement.
2. *spelling*. when "women" is spelled traditionally, it appears that men is the root and women is made by adding a prefix. many womyn, myself included, prefer to have our own spelling to set us apart as womyn-identified-womyn, as opposed to a more traditional way of expressing what it is to be woman in the society.



Lesbian Separatist State (from p.43)

a community that would be home for me and totally be there for me. i put everything i had into community — all my money, all my emotional energy and skills, and it broke down in some pretty painful ways. it was hard for me to put so much into community and not be able to live the dream.

this is not unique to lesbian community. it's difficult to have cohesiveness in a group and have enough safety for the members to be able to express their full and true selves, because individual expression can sometimes be in conflict with the shared values of the community. when i was 21 the lesbian community meant everything to me and anything was possible; including the complete downfall of patriarchy.

at 36, the patriarchy seems as entrenched as it was in 1982. and while i do have an extended community, i don't share money with them nor live with them in ways that i have dreamed of. in addition, i have felt that the lesbian community is not very flexible. of course, i can only speak generally, and there will always be lesbians or sections of lesbians that will not fit what i have seen, but the lesbian community that i have known has not been open to womyn involved with men or to transgendered people, has a certain overall uptightness around sex, and generally has negative reactions to womyn not toeing the ideological line. i was definitely beginning to feel like i could feel more at home with some looser expectations of what it was to have integrity and wholeness in a community atmosphere. plus, my FTM lover was (and is) still on the scene changing my needs around womyn-only space, and making me wonder about the solidity of my lesbian identity.

some of the womyn i had associated with in my separatist years and even lived on land with began to share with me, in strictest confidence, that they felt stifled by the womyn-only-womyn-loving-womyn environment. along with me, they were scared of disapproval and reproach from the womyn they had felt so close to. they were seeking safe ways to explore their bisexuality and still remain strong and in touch

with their spiritual centers. our safety issues started with finding someone we could really talk to about our attraction to men. we had come out of the closet as lesbians into an expanded world with seemingly infinite possibilities, but then, years later, some of us just found ourselves cramped in another closet.

it was freeing to realize i was not alone on my journey. i don't want my rich and wonderful lesbian past to be discounted in any way, and i take pains to make sure my new friends know how important that part of my life has been. it's pretty painful that lesbians are so willing to discount me now that i'm opening myself to men.

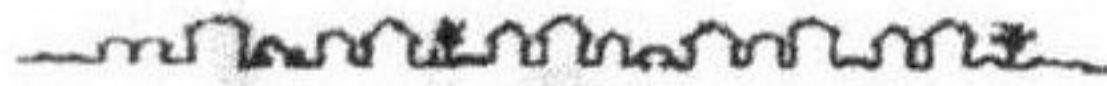
i'm wondering how to define myself. i still live a lesbian-identified lifestyle in many ways, but i know i'm not lesbian anymore. it's also true that i don't know what i am. i've tried on queer, bisexual, dyke-identified bisexual, womyn-identified bisexual, lesbian-identified bisexual; none really fit. a bisexual friend once said to me, "many of us don't identify with the label 'bisexual' for many reasons, not the least of which is that there are more than two genders."

i sure feel that this is part of my struggle around the word bisexual and i guess i'm not so interested in what my label is as i am in what i am today, and what i am becoming. it feels good to me to feel connected to my heart and my life path and not stay a *de facto* member of a community that is really not filling my needs. i feel sad about moving on. i feel sad that many lesbians i have known and loved will probably think less of me, that i am "selling out," that i have "joined the enemy." i feel scared about feeling ostracized. i feel uncertain about where my power as a womon comes from, since up until now it has come from my lesbian identity. but more than all of that, i feel empowered and strong enough to stand up for what i know is right for me in my heart.

kaseja laurine wilder is a deeply spiritual being who aspires to make her living through her psychic skills. She's learning to truly be happy and love life more each day. She can be contacted by email: wilderwym@sprynet.com.



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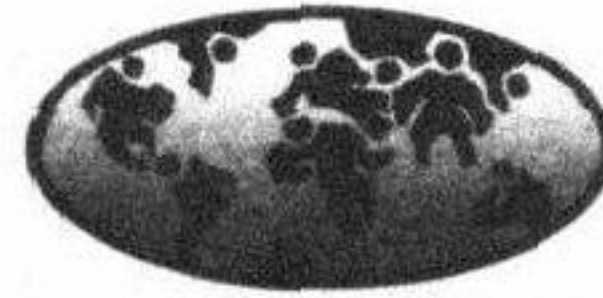
Dear Jane: The Soap Opera
will return next issue.

Meanwhile, the characters are all:

- 1) enjoying the issue in peace and quiet
- 2) having really hot sex
- 3) having interpersonal dramas
- 4) doing laundry and vacuuming.

Alternatively, use your imagination.

See you next issue!



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the two-sided threesome

by Charles Anders
illustrations by Amy Conger

Ellen and Andrew merge into a tangle of caresses that begins and ends with them. Inches away from it all, I stroke first one, then the other, hoping they'll let me in. They both giggle incessantly as they rediscover the magic of full body contact: hair, breasts, thighs and feet all nudging against each other.

Experimentally I bite Ellen on the butt. She kicks me without breaking a stroke. The blow, surprisingly strong, almost knocks me off the bed. "Ow." I clutch the sore spot on my left upper thigh.

"If you're going to be obnoxious," she murmur-moans, "that's what you get."

"Sorry." I return to tending them both as they tend each other. I experiment with licking the small of Andrew's back, the delicious double indentation just above his bottom.

Still, it's hard not to feel left out, especially since I did all the work to set this up. I met Andrew at the racquetball club and was instantly fascinated. He was wiry and lank all over except for his swollen forearms. Veins stood out in relief along their underside, and I imagined his penis would be similar: firm, veiny, energetic. As I shook the hand at the end of that buff forearm, I imagined gripping Andrew's cock.

I don't fall for a man often, but when I do, I fall hard. A few conversations with Andrew, and I found myself obsessing about him like a teenager. I strained to catch glimpses in the shower. Meeting his opaque black eyes summoned feelings akin to addressing a crowd of thousands. Even his receding hairline turned me on.

Our conversations were mostly about the stock market at first, but they acquired a flirtatious edge. Finally, we went for drinks and Andrew confessed over his third scotch that he was bi.

Haltingly, I mentioned him to Ellen. My wife is very open-minded, but that only means I'm never sure what she'll go for. "I think you'd like him a lot," I ventured, staring at the chicken in her stewpot.

"I always like your racquetball friends." Ellen splashed water briskly over her leeks. "Up to a point, that is. What's special about him?"

We circled for a while longer before I got to the point. "Remember how we talked, a couple years back, about doing a threesome, if we found the right person?"

Actually, Ellen didn't, and she was somewhat startled by the depth of attraction I confessed to for Andrew. Finally she put a rubber-gloved hand on my shoulder. "Listen, Tony. I've told you before that if you really want to explore your bisexuality, I'll support you all the way. Date this Andrew guy, go to the Lambda Lounge and cruise. I only ask that you not listen to Bronski Beat in the house."

I couldn't explain to her that I lacked sexual confidence without her by my side; it sounded too infantile, but I thought of her as the wellspring of my sexuality after so long together. Exploring without her would be too scary.

She was much more attractive than I was. She had hair the color of sunlight on a piece of wood, brown with glowing highlights. Her figure was still slender and her breasts were as upturned as her small nose. Her eyes were brown with yellow flecks that sparkled when she smiled.

By contrast, I was getting chubby and bald on top. I felt as though she were the prize, and I the string attached.

Instead of explaining, I joked. "We're a married couple. We share everything."

So we invited Andrew to dinner. Ellen made up her mind before the stuffed mushrooms were gone. She winked at me as I helped her lift the roast onto a silver platter — a wedding present we'd never used. I winked back.

I broached the topic to Andrew over dessert while Ellen listened. "Hey, no fair," he said at last. "You can't fill a man with torte and then expect him to perform sexually!" That being his only objection, we agreed to meet up again in a week. In the mean time, Ellen said he stopped by her studio once or twice, which was slightly suprising but I thought little of it. Apparently he loved Ellen's art.

I try kissing the nape of Andrew's neck, and he snorts. "That tickles." I notice Ellen easing a condom onto Andrew's cock, which is as rich and veiny as I had imagined. I hunger for his cock in my mouth, but it's lost between her thighs, rubbing against them and her vulva.

The giggles turn to moans from Ellen as the cock nuzzles her opening. They're still belly-to-belly, thigh-to-thigh, a sexual closed circuit. "Tony." Ellen's voice is high and distracted. "Be a dear and get some lubricant, just in case."

I get the lube, accepting my acolyte status. I'm a spectator to the motion of their smooth-contoured bodies. The wonderful wand enters my wife, and I'm left with the option of suck-

ing the balls at its root. Which appeals to me, but I'm afraid Andrew's legs will trap my neck.

"When do I get to have fun?" They giggle.

"We'll see," Ellen squeals. "If you're good."

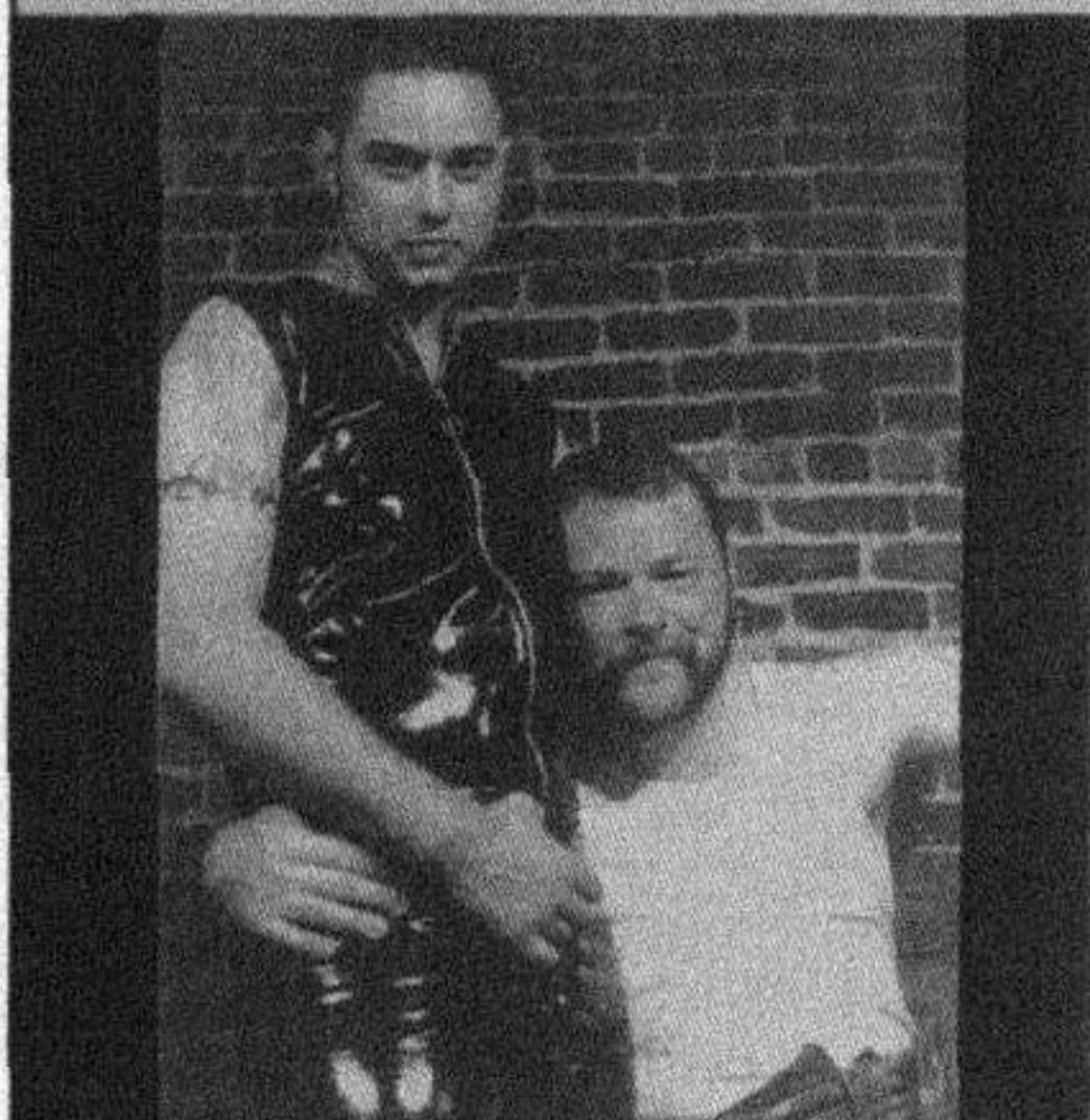
I put on my clothes, slowly and with great dignity. I knot my cravat and put on a fisherman's cap at a jaunty angle. Ellen and Andrew are too ecstatic to notice. Their hands are meshed into twin steeples. Andrew is on top of her, his tight butt grinding like a pepper mill. "I'm going to the Lambda Lounge to cruise."

Ellen blows me a kiss from underneath Andrew. "Have fun, honey." I go out to the car, but fear grips me as I try to start the engine. I end up sitting in the Mazda for three hours, waiting until Andrew comes out of the house and gets into his Camry, whistling, and drives away. I already know that when I enter the house, Ellen won't know why I'm upset. I begin inventing marvelous stories of the Lambda Lounge and my adventures there.

Growing up, Charles Anders was convinced Starsky and Hutch were a married couple. Now Charles is married himself and lives in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.



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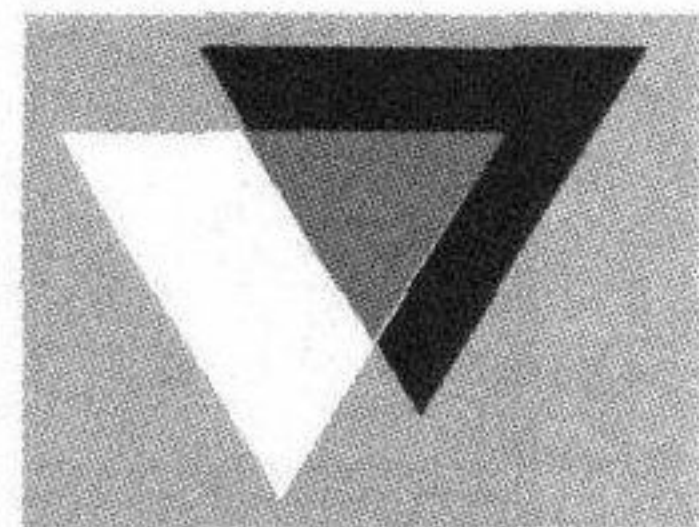
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What is BiNet USA?

BiNet USA is the oldest and largest national Bisexual organization in the USA. Our mission is to collect and distribute information regarding Bisexuality; to facilitate the development of Bisexual community and visibility; to work for the equal rights of Bisexuals and all oppressed peoples; and to eradicate all forms of oppression inside and outside the Bisexual community. We are committed to being affirmatively inclusive of a multicultural constituency and political agenda. Becoming a member of BiNet USA is an opportunity to join with others who share your vision of a Bi-friendly world, and who recognize the value and power of a vibrant national political action organization of Bisexuals and Bi-friendly supporters. We have a great future ahead of us, and we look forward to welcoming you to our ranks.

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Email Address: _____

Phone: _____ Is discretion necessary? Yes ___ No ___

BiNet USA asks that each member donate \$1 per \$1,000 of annual income. For those who are able, we ask that you consider donating between \$1 and \$10 per \$1,000 income (between 0.1% and 1%). No one is denied membership due to lack of funds. Dues can be waived for those unable to pay.

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As Femme As We Want to Be:

Tracy Schmidt Reports from the 2nd Annual Femme Gender Conference

I was volunteering at the Harvey Milk Institute's Butch-FtM Dialog this spring when this guy came rushing up to me. "Can I ask you a question?" he gasped. "I've been trying to figure this out all day, and no one's been able to tell me, and I looked over and I thought well, gosh! if anyone knows, it's her!" I braced myself. He looked at me plaintively and demanded, "What's a 'femme'?"

Better femmes than me have passed on that question, but he looked so desperate that I searched for an answer. "Well," I ventured, "to me, a femme is someone who takes the characteristics and stereotypes associated with being a woman and uses them as a source of personal power. Like, if someone is gonna stare at my body anyway, I'm damn well gonna make them look, and once I have their attention, I'm gonna tell them something. Get it?"

He burst into a gigantic smile, and with a breathless, "Thank you!" he rushed off again. Hey, at least I knew I'd dressed right that day.

The Second Annual Femme Gender Conference, sponsored by the Harvey Milk Institute(HMI) this May, gave more than 400 people a chance to explore that question and more — what femme is, how we work it, struggle with it, display it, honor it. HMI put on a huge event, with film screenings, four different performances, an art display, and two days' worth of panels and workshops.

Just like the term "femme", this conference covered a lot of territory. The conference organizers aimed to welcome every kind of person with more than a drop of femme in their souls, and to make plenty of space to talk about how we are, perform, or just love femme. Girls, boys, dykes, bi-femmes, fag-femmes, people from communities of color, young femmes, trans-femmes, lesbians, drag-femmes, working class and rich femmes, parents, fat femmes, and a few garden-variety freaks like me crowded the 33 workshops. (Oddly enough,

lots of our volunteers turned out to be butch or female-to-male transgendered folks. Gee, I wonder why...)

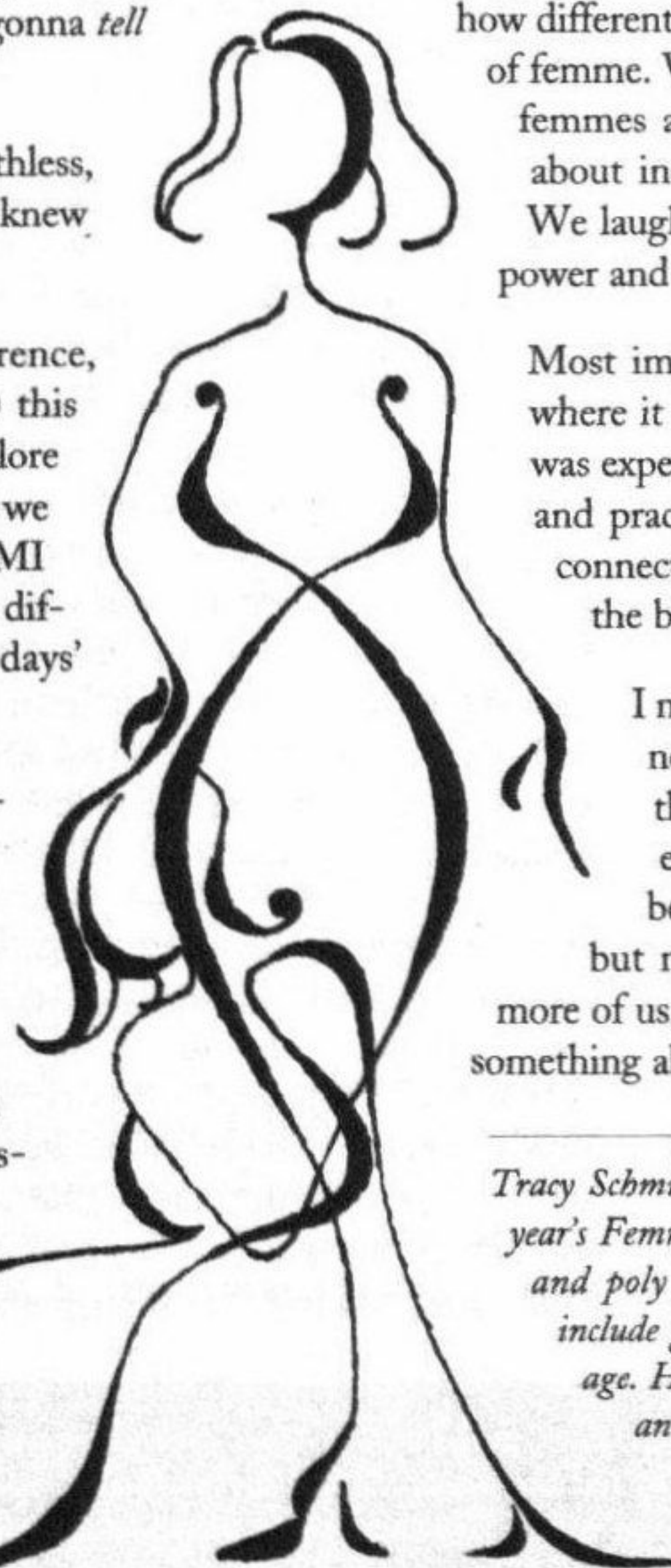
Femmes flocked to sessions like *Femme As An Evolving Gender Identity*, *Bisexual Femmes and Femme Bisexuals*, *Fag and Drag Femme*, *I'd Love To Ask You Out But I Don't Know Who You Are*, *Trans Femme: Beyond the Bedroom*, *What We're Rolling Around In Bed With (femmes of color only)*, *Femmes With FtM Partners*, *Switch Femme*, *Fem-man-inity*, and *How To Fuck In High Heels*. We spoke with incredible panelists including Kate Bornstein, Lani Ka'ahumanu, Liz Highleyman, JoAnn Loulan, and Karen Bullock-Jordan.

We examined the challenges and joys of claiming femme identity alongside other identities in our lives. We discussed how different communities hold different experiences of femme. We debated whether we should speak of femmes as somehow transgendered. We ranted about inclusion. We argued about community. We laughed at ourselves. And we celebrated the power and range of our femme styles.

Most important, we met each other in a world where it can be hard to even see one another. It was experimental and emotional and challenging and practical and brilliant and contentious and connected all at once — two amazing days of the best of queer culture.

I never did find out why that particular guy needed to understand femme so bad, even though I spotted him there at the conference. And like the rest of the crowd, I'll bet he still can't exactly define "femme" — but now he's finally found several hundred more of us, dressed just right and ready to tell him something about it.

Tracy Schmidt was the Conference Coordinator for this year's Femme Gender Conference. She identifies as a bi and poly femme dyke top whose areas of obsession include gender, motorcycles, S/M, travel, and cleavage. Her current project (with Liz Highleyman) is an anthology focused on newly emerging gender identities.



What Your Mother Never Told You

Advice from Uncle Bill
& Auntie Andrea



Dear Uncle Bill:

My partner and I have been in an open relationship for the past two years, and we've known each other as friends for much longer. We enjoy a fair amount of S/M and bondage in our relationship, although things have sometimes seemed a bit stale recently.

Lately, my partner has been practicing S/M with a couple of friends. One pal in particular concerns me because his style of S/M is very heavy and intense. My partner (the "bottom") seems to like the abuse. But this guy's doing some pretty extreme things with my honey-pie, and it's causing me a lot of anxiety.

What can I do? I don't want to come across as a spoilsport, but I can't go on hiding my feelings, either.

—Anxious

Dear Anxious,

Ask yourself which is bothering you more: your concern for your partner's safety and well-being, or your concern that your partner achieves a greater degree of intimacy via S/M with this guy than is available to you via S/M or

other activities. If the issue is safety, then you need to talk in practical terms about what makes you queasy. Once you've talked, your partner may need to re-negotiate limits in playing with this top in order to avoid causing you excessive discomfort. But if you don't bring it up, it'll never happen.

On the other hand, if it's an intimacy issue — as is often the case — you need to ask your partner why she or he feels it is necessary to go outside the relationship for extreme forms of intimacy. You may want to talk mutually with a counselor or other impartial third party to sort out the barriers to intimacy between you two. Sometimes a lot can be achieved in just a few sessions by focusing on how a couple is intimate, and where intimacy breaks down. Often it's a problem that can be reduced by working on communication skills.

Naming feelings is important. You shouldn't have to hide yours. Withdrawal is seldom a satisfying solution; it just gives the negative feelings a chance to multiply. You need to talk with your partner about your anxiety. If the thought of this causes you even more anxiety (!), then practice

your approach by writing a letter to your partner in which you describe your anxiety and what triggers it. You probably don't need to share this letter with your partner; it's really a chance for you to organize your thoughts and rehearse a face-to-face discussion.

Many partners in a non-monogamous relationship feel a loss of intimacy once the "honeymoon" part of the relationship subsides. That's natural, but it's important to do something about it. Talking about what turns you on — and off — is vital to nurturing your growth as a couple. So is experimentation. Not every experiment will be a smashing success, but you'll probably find some new items to include in your sensual repertoire.

Finally, remember that there are many ways to be intimate outside of the bedroom — or dungeon. Shared activities can build trust and bring you closer together. Make a list of possibilities — a good joint project, by the way — and then try some with your partner.

I wish you luck!

—Uncle Bill

Uncle Bill (a.k.a Bill Brent) edits and publishes two sex-oriented publications. *Black Sheets* is a bi-oriented zine for kinky, queer, intelligent, and irreverent folk. *The Black Book* is an illustrated resource guide for the erotic explorer. Both are available at the ATM order line, (800) 818-8823.

Dear Aunt Andrea;

I'm a 35-year-old bi guy who has always been very feminist, but recently I've been having very powerful fantasies about subjugating and raping women. In my fantasies, I rip their clothes off, beat them until they're bruised and bleeding, and pound into their cunts until they're sore and whimpering. These new fantasies are very hot for me, and very intense. Do they mean I'm sick? Should I seek mental help? Do these desires make me less of a feminist? I still hate injustice against women and want to work against the inequalities in our society, but I feel like such an oppressor and sexist pig. Why don't I have these fantasies about men? And why are these desires surfacing only now? What has changed in me?

— *Feeling Sick*
(*But Horny*) in Chicago

Dear Feeling Sick:

Plenty of men and women have variations on fantasies about being overpowered, abused, and taken. Likewise, plenty of men and women fantasize about being the ones to do the overpowering and taking. Are all of these people sick anti-feminists in need of mental help? No. Let's face it: Sometimes the stuff that gets you hot just isn't necessarily "politically correct."

If these fantasies only live in your mind and you never want to physically act them out with another person, then that's fine — the only one who has to consent to something you don't do is yourself.

From the tone of your letter, it sounds like you already know the difference between fantasy and reality, and your conscience would stop you from actually trying to play this scenario out on an unwilling female. If it wouldn't, then you really should be seeing a counselor.

But what about playing this scenario out

with a willing female? There are, in fact, independent, intelligent, staunchly feminist people of both sexes who enjoy fantasizing about playing the supporting role in a scene similar to yours.

Suppose that a submissive person and a dominant one got together, discussed their fantasies, agreed on a time and a place, and a scenario — say, perhaps washing dishes when a "burglar" breaks in. Perhaps they'd agree to do it right there on the kitchen table, and that physical force such as shoving or pulling hair were acceptable, but nothing that would leave bruises (actually beating people bloody has this annoying tendency to result in broken bones and other such non-erotic nastiness). Perhaps they'd even agree on a special word that means, "That's too much, slow down." That way the submissive would be able to struggle a lot and yell, "No, stop!" as part of the fun. This could be very fulfilling (and very hot) for both of them!

Some people feel uneasy about S/M and dominance/submission in general, and when a form of eroticism happens, for whatever reason, to intersect with institutionalized forms of oppression, it seems only logical that a socially conscious person would acknowledge the larger implications involved. Does that mean that you shouldn't enjoy your fantasies even if you don't hurt anyone without their consent? No!

As a woman who enjoys plenty of submissive fantasies of her own, let me attempt to ease your mind a bit: For a woman to identify her desire, define the terms under which she is comfortable attaining it, and then move forth and freely explore it, is inherently a feminist act.

To join with her in pursuing a mutual desire by helping her act out her submissive fantasies hardly sounds oppressive or sexist. Oppressive sexism would be telling her that she shouldn't have these

feelings at all, and must suppress them! Credit her with the ability to make decisions for herself about what she can and can't do and enjoy with her own body, and you're not being oppressive at all, even if the activity you're engaged in may superficially appear to be.

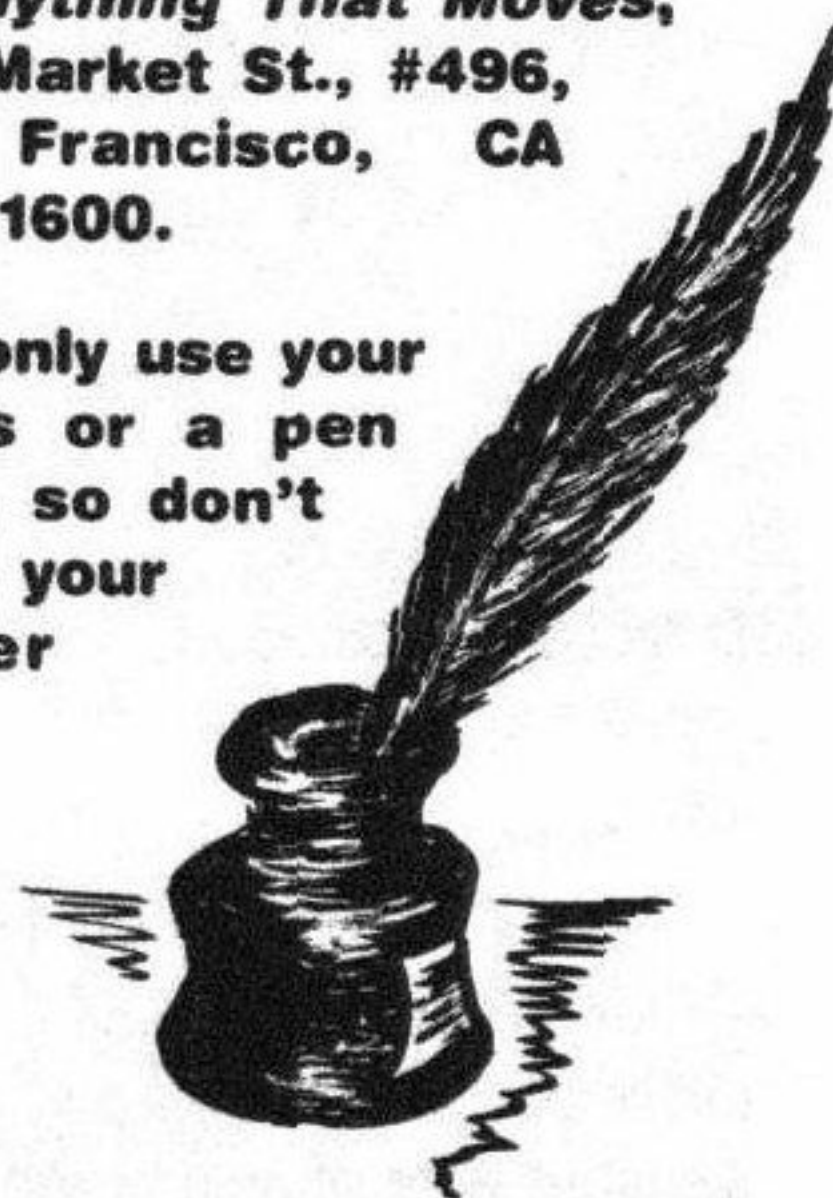
Why are you having these feelings now, and why are they only about women? I don't know. I do know that there's no reason to feel bad about having dominant sexual fantasies, and there's also no reason to feel bad about acting them out in a safe, consensual manner with an informed, willing partner.

If the question of "why now, and why only women?" continues to bother you, or you don't feel comfortable with your fantasies for your own moral or ethical reasons, perhaps a sex-positive therapist, who can understand your history and give informed advice, would be able to help you sort things out.

— *Auntie Andrea*

What your mother probably never told you was that Uncle Bill & Auntie Andrea are available to answer all your questions on sex, love, relationships, etc. Send them c/o Anything That Moves, 2261 Market St., #496, San Francisco, CA 94114-1600.

We'll only use your initials or a pen name, so don't worry, your mother won't find out...



This issue, *Anything That Moves* is pleased to introduce our new advice columnist, Auntie Andrea. In her own words, Auntie Andrea is "a pervy, horny bisexual chick who is having way too much fun living in San Francisco. In her spare time, she collects labels."

REVIEWS

THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO ANAL SEX FOR WOMEN

by Tristan Taormino
(Cleis Press)

Tristan Taormino's ground-breaking perspective in *The Ultimate Guide to Anal Sex for Women* lovingly and creatively dispels negative, mistaken assumptions about anal sex, replacing them with a clear, open, and illustrated discussion of anatomy, emotion, technique, health, accessories and resources. Her insights and information are spiced with explicit stories of women's real anal erotic experiences.

And, though female-specific sensitivities are overdue on this subject, her book is certainly not just for women! She writes to a broad audience of the curious, the adventurous and the experienced, and reaches across lines of sex, gender, sexuality and relationship orientations. The anal orifice is "the great equalizer," she argues, a shared source of "unlimited erotic possibilities."

Her central "know thyself" message encourages readers to feel their way slowly and respectfully toward a more relaxed, less alienated state of anal health. With trust and patience, all can practice (and play) their way to personal anal bliss.

(Shiloh Dewease)

Cleis Press: 1-800-780-2279

BILLY'S BOY

by Patricia Nell Warren
(Wildcat Press)

reviewed by John Denton

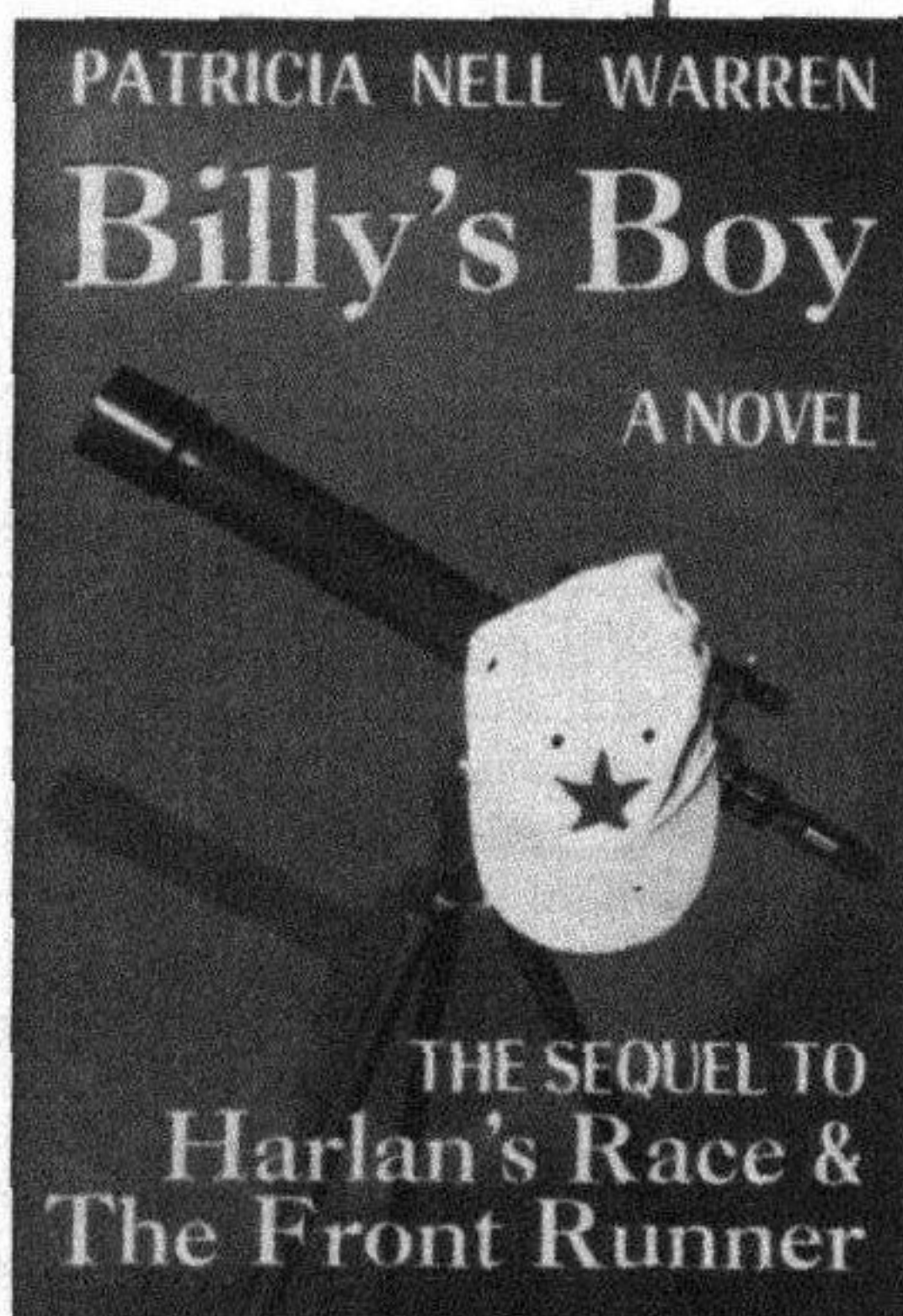
For those of us who read *The Front Runner*, or are members of one of the local lesbigay running groups named after it, *Billy's Boy* — the sequel to *The Front Runner* and *Harlan's Race* — is a "must read," if only to catch up with the lives of the interesting characters Patricia Nell Warren has created.

Billy, a 12-year-old adolescent coming of age in Southern California, painfully struggles to learn what the words "gay, lesbian, bisexual and queer" mean as applied to himself, his mother and her friends. What stimulates Billy to probe into his parentage and reflect on his life and his relationships so seriously is a dream in which his dead father seems to be sending him a message from the Cat Nebula, somewhere beyond the cosmos.

What gradually occurs to Billy, first during his school days in Orange County and then in Malibu where he and his mother move to escape Southern California bigotry, is a big revelation. His mother and friends all fit under the snide and mean labels he and his friends bandy about at school: "gay, lesbian, bi, queer faggots." So, "What am I, then?" and "What does that make me?" become daily mental exercises. In the typically herky-jerky way teens self-reflect, Billy comes to look at his own sexual relationships with boy and girl friends and his mother and her "acquired" family of queer men and women.

As a *Summer of '42* adolescent myself, addicted to serial "boy" novels (I read everything Stephen Meder and Altschuler wrote), I understand the terrible importance of Warren's book for today. I think the author does a wonderful job of charting the emotional confusion and realities that today's young people are dealing with, realities that are so different from my own. Warren does not shy away from dealing with Billy's alienation from this "family" around him as he gradually comes to realize that he lives in the midst of the "alien queer nation" that his school friends denigrate on every occasion.

If I had not just read the *San Francisco Bay Guardian* story on queer teens hiding from their parents in "safe houses" in San Francisco, or heard recently of the suicide of a gay 14-year-old at the high school I attended and where, later, I taught as a Catholic priest, I might not have taken Warren's book as seriously as I did. But it's clearly important that there are books on the library shelves today by Patricia Nell Warren. As a teen, I would have loved to read about someone my own age who reveled in adolescent sexual loving with another boy and was



trying to work through all the confusion. Now that I'm older, the book is an excellent point of departure for an ongoing dialogue as my friends and I try our best to understand our own adult confusion around gay, lesbian, bi, and transgender issues. Great job, Patricia Warren! *Wildcat Press: 213-966-2466.*

SEX SEEN: THE EMERGENCE OF MODERN SEXUALITY IN AMERICA

**by Sharon R. Ullman
(University of California Press)**

reviewed by Amy Conger

By the turn of the 20th century, America was transforming rapidly into an industrialized nation. With its influx of immigrants and its blurring class distinctions, one Victorian standard abandoned by American society was the strict gender lines of social life: Men and women began to associate in public. According to Ullman, this was the seed that led public opinion around sex and gender to begin shifting toward what we know now as publicly acceptable heterosexuality.

The examples presented in this doctoral-thesis-cum-paperback are limited to the court records of Sacramento, California, and entertainment such as early film and vaudeville. The author notes that, at the time, a personally fulfilling sexuality became more important to married people than reproductive sex and that female impersonators were challenging the audience's views of gender roles and prompting the print media to comment at length on the physical traits that were signs of being "less than" one's gender. Meanwhile, the white, middle-class Reform Movement battled what they saw as societal moral decay. Their efforts centered around the skyrocketing divorce rate, homosexuality and prostitution, inadvertently bringing these issues into a larger public consciousness.

Ullman presents much more such evidence, but her points are inconclusive. She does not point out any legacy left us by those turbulent times, nor does she provide us with a historical context for the changes she presents. Her book left me with questions; it could have been twice as long.

Strangely, the author's comments on non-heterosexuality are limited to men and she makes little effort to consolidate her observations of attitudes around gender roles and identification, especially those of women. One very important point that she nearly missed completely was the cultural shift toward identifying people by their sexual practices. *Sex Seen* offers an interesting peek into the sexual attitudes of ordinary people at the time, but she never once mentions bisexuality in concept or practice.

BALLADS FOR BENPADRONE

IBOPA

(Nubby Records)

IBOPA's lead singer, Jamie Stewart, is an out bisexual, but his *real* orientation could be called "cabaret extreme." On its latest album, the band slides through an array of boozy, funky styles, drawing on spooky organs, swinging horns, wanking techno beats and anything else in its arsenal that will bring Stewart's obsessive-unhinged lyrics to life.

The group comes from South San Francisco Bay (their name, which stands for "The Indestructible Beat of Palo Alto," is sort of a California in-joke) and they share with bands like Primus and Cake a uniquely West Coast, three-ring-vaudeville approach to music: high-energy absurdity tempered by little or no musical agenda except the conviction that the show must go on. Which is not to say that the music doesn't matter: the band is full of surprises, and they never falter, even when their arrangements become silly or strange.

Stewart's presence is the key, though. He's like the kid in fourth grade who won't sit still: it's fun to watch the freaky things he does, but you'd be better friends if he'd just



IBOPA (photo by Mikel Zwissler)

chill out.

Even when the subject turns grim, as on "Hives," a song about an AIDS test, Stewart's delivery is more manic than searching. The boy is still there, but his imagination is already somewhere else.

(Kevin McCulloch)

IBOPA hotline: 415-562-3859

REVIEWS

BITE HARD

by Justin Chin

(Manic D Press, \$11.95)

Justin Chin is a wordsmith, a painter of words. *Bite Hard* is honest passion: grim and powerful imagery of despair, ennui, desperation, depression, and hopelessness, but full of submission to the Tao of the situation. Chin encircles mundane subjects with meaningful imagery. He is a craftsman but not a visionary. His work is peopled with desperate dark souls on the edge of an abyss, souls acclimated to living there.

Chin was born and raised in Southeast Asia and lived there for most of his life. He lives in California now, but the ghosts of his past haunt him. His Asian poems are his darkest: a male prostitute's bitter memories of the men who used and forgot him; the dehumanizing monotony of factory work; yearnings for a less regimented life in a less outwardly restrictive land; the public exposure of a bridegroom arrested and jailed for sexual solicitation of a minor. Desperate life and horrible death.

His California poems range more widely, from bitter to funny: A convenience store clerk reflects on the power of liquor bottles and a porn movie maker muses over his lover, the well-endowed bisexual star. He writes about loss — lost youth, lost arrogance, lost ignorance, lost love — and about the warmth of memory. He writes about pop culture, censorship, fist-fucking, the new age, and what really goes on in the kitchens of Chinese restaurants. Chin is spare. He has the poet's eye for seeing the big lessons in small events, the transcendent nature of each act, the unity of all existence, the reflection of life in a moment.

(Dennis Stavis)

Manic D Press, Box 410804,
San Francisco, CA 94141



TALES FROM THE CLIT:

A FEMALE EXPERIENCE OF PORNOGRAPHY

Edited by Cherie Matrix

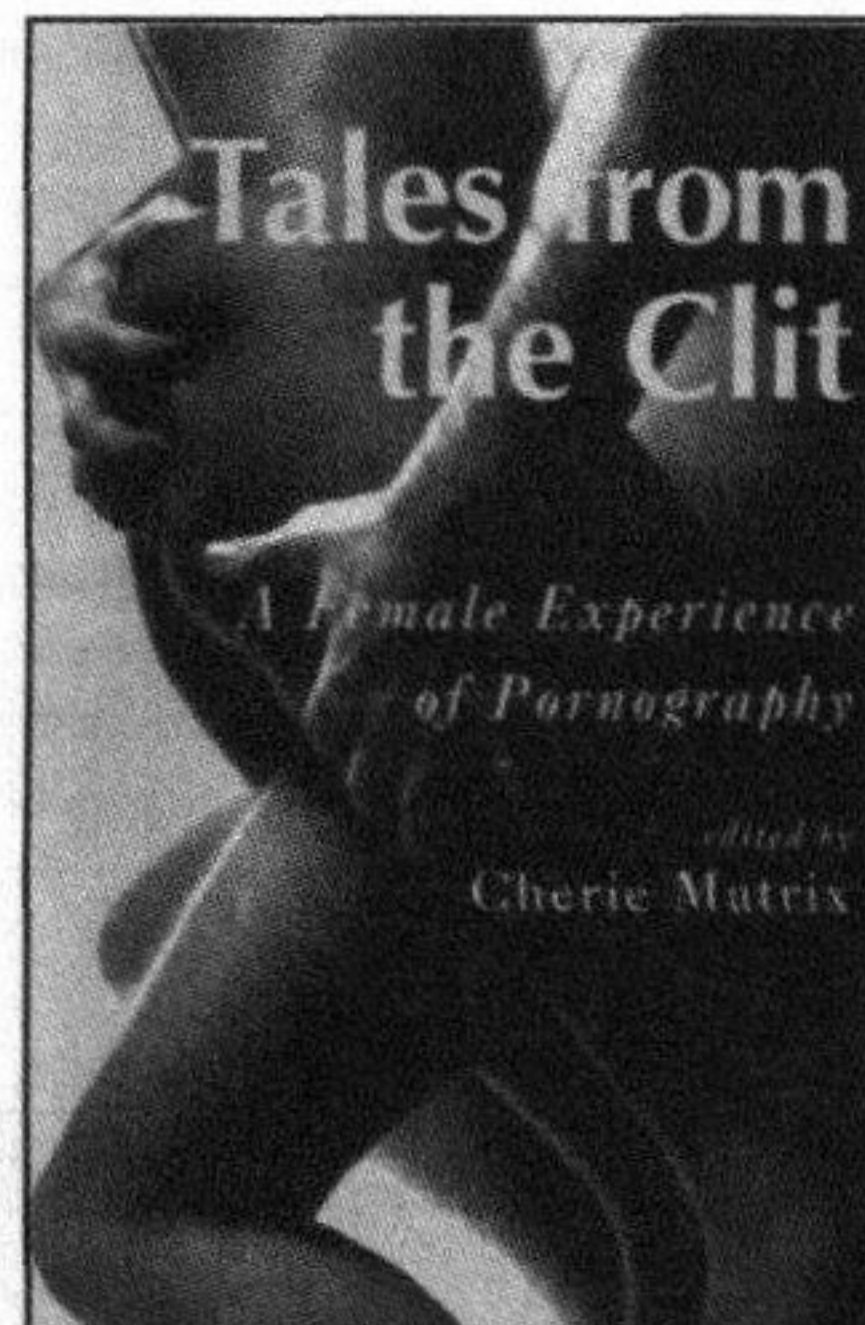
(AK Press, \$10.95)

reviewed by Shiloh Dewease

Age six, peeking through crimson velvet curtains at the "XXX Theatre" to investigate the strange groaning, moaning and squealing noises: my stomach flutters as I focus on a full-screen close-up of hot lava spurting towards heaving flesh and drizzling off of two red lips. This first experience of pornography seemed even naughtier when I realized the celluloid flesh belonged to a family friend. (I had to blush around her for some time afterwards.) This was only the first encounter with pornography to have a profound effect on my sexual aesthetic as I've wrestled with my appreciation for smut and critical disappointment with the lack of explicit materials by and for women. Opening this dialogue with other feminists is often just as frustrating as watching dissatisfying porn, since the conversations tend to lean heavily in one of two directions: "all-porn-is-objectification" vs. "all-porn-is-good," with me somewhere in the middle, trying to make peace.

Tales from the Clit is a welcomed relief from the old debate. Cherie Matrix and her comrades at Feminists Against Censorship have compiled a tantalizing and nourishing smorgasbord of intimate essays from some of the world's most pro-sex feminists relating their first encounters and ongoing struggles in the male-dominated arena of pornographic production and consumption. This collection completely dispels the notion that feminists must be either for or against porn, opting instead to savor the deliciousness of diversity, recognizing that feminist reactions to sexually explicit material are as varied as the spectrum of feminism, itself as broad as the vast array of women's experiences.

I particularly enjoyed the essay by Arabella Melville, co-founder of *Libertine*, who has experienced pressure from fellow porn producers trying to edge her out of the market for quality educational and diverse reader-centric porn. She argues, from personal experience, that the porn market relies on manufactured discontent, forcing customers to browse numbing aisles of the same old crap, combining the smut for more stimulation. Perhaps people consume crap porn



because that's what's available; people might not buy unfulfilling fluff if they had real variety. Therefore, producers of standard porn have a stake in keeping the market closed to innovation and variation for fear of losing out.

Though much porn at present unquestioningly endorses negative stereotypes, the right to consume and create pornography from a feminist perspective is essential to the emergence of women as powerful sexual beings. *Tales from the Clit* is a milestone, bridging the debates to make our desires known.

AK Press, P.O. Box 40682, San Francisco, CA 94140-0682

WHORES AND OTHER FEMINISTS

edited by Jill Nagle
(Routledge)

reviewed by Monica McLemore

Jill Nagle has pulled together 29 of the most cutting-edge, sex-positive women to write for a diverse, funny, political, serious, and wonderful anthology. The book does not merely focus on the relationship between "whoredom" and feminism, but presents true-life experiences of the women and men whose livelihood is based on sex work. At times raw and raunchy, the book is a must-read for anyone interested in contemporary conversations about the sex work industry and those who patronize it.

The topics include everything from peep show workers to street prostitutes, professional pornography filmmakers, and massage parlor workers. My favorite part of the book was the roundtable discussion with women of color moderated by Nagel. She presents the views of various women of color who explain how sexism, racism, and sex-negativity create barriers for freedom and autonomy in their work.

Other stories tackle the "standard of beauty" myth that is perpetuated in society, or address head-on issues of color, homosexuality, violence, inequitable distribution of wealth and the disappointing lack of support many sex workers have received from feminists.

At almost 300 pages, the book is not a light read. Many of the authors use empirical data as a framework from which to write and in so doing they stimulate us to re-examine and challenge our own sex-negativity. Beware: if you start reading this book on a rainy night, you may find yourself welcoming the sun to a new day!

MARRIED WOMEN WHO LOVE WOMEN

by Carren Strock
(Doubleday, \$23.95)

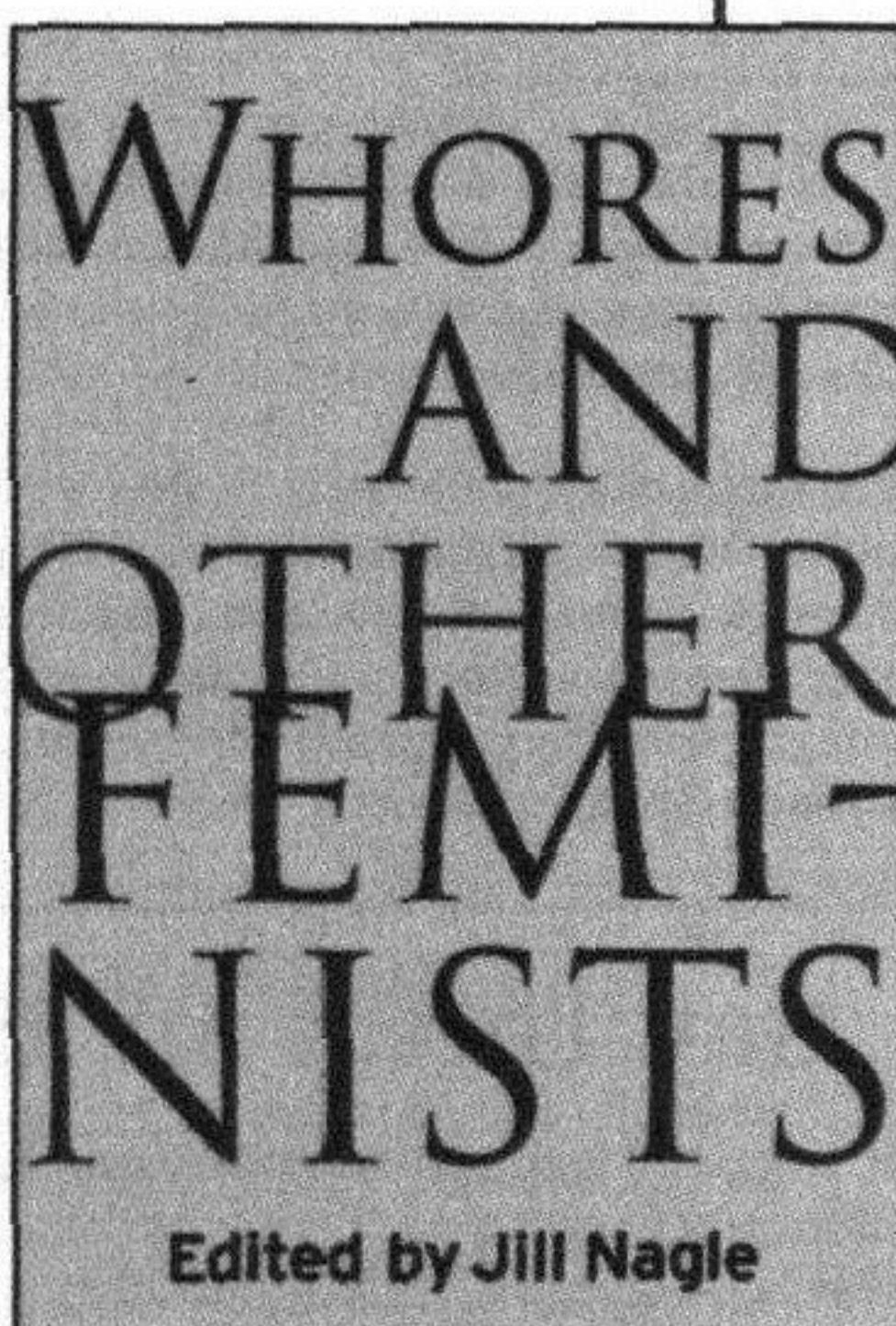
As a woman who spent eight years in a committed relationship with a man before coming out as a raving bi-dyke, I found this book oddly touching. The often painful and confusing situation of lesbians in heterosexual marriage is dealt with gently and non-judgmentally by the author, Carren Strock.

Strock, a MWLW (married woman who loves women) herself, has compiled brief testimonials and interviews focusing on the personal stories of over 100 MWLW. The voices include wives who left their marriages as soon as they discovered their orientation and those who sought a balance between children, family and new loves. (A few found that polyamory was a viable and stable option.) Many chose to remain in their marriages, some refusing to explore their lesbianism for religious or cultural reasons, and quite a few stating that they never intend to come out.

I was fascinated with the story of two MWLW who have been "best friends" for more than 30 years, bringing two families together regularly and never revealing to anyone that they are lovers. A few interviews with the spouses, children and family members of MWLWs round off the book, providing a foil and a balance for the women's own statements and anecdotal remarks. Strock also offers her personal history as a MWLW, the results of some personal soul-searching and some thoughtful theorizing on an obviously well-researched topic.

Often mentioned are the emotional bonding and soft, caring intimacy that these women find with other women but that they do not find with cold and distant husbands. Here the book did not echo my experiences. I would have liked to see more about bisexuality (which is discussed only briefly) and more raw honesty about desire between women, rather than "as opposed to men."

(Elaine Miller)





EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT US

Robertson, Operation Rescue Lay Siege to Florida

Disney Announces Increased Profits Despite Southern Baptists' Boycott

(June 1998) - Televangelist Pat Robertson this month threatened the residents of Orlando, FL with predictions of terrorism and natural disasters if the city continues to support queer rights and allow gay tourism.

"I would warn Orlando that you're right in the way of some serious hurricanes and I don't think I'd be waving those flags in God's face if I were you," Robertson said, referring to rainbow-colored gay pride flags flying from city lampposts in June for Gay Pride month.

Robertson made the comments on his religious talk show *The 700 Club* on the Christian Broadcasting Network, which he owns.

Robertson, who sought the Republican presidential nomination in 1988, also predicted that tolerance of homosexuality "will bring terrorist bombs, it'll bring earthquakes, tornadoes and possibly a meteor." He told his viewers that his words were "a message of redemption," not hate, and that he was not

expressing his own opinion but speaking of Biblical truths.

That same month, members of Operation Rescue, a radical anti-abortion protest group that has expanded to include other family values issues, protested Disney World during the annual "Gay Days." Reasons for the protest included abortion clinics operating in the area of Orlando, pornographic books for sale in the area, and Walt Disney Company's promotion of homosexuality as an acceptable lifestyle.

Disney's policy of allowing queer attendance at its theme parks and providing domestic partner benefits to its employees was criticized by some religious groups, but cheered by many queer organizations.

The corporation's profits seem to agree with earlier studies indicating that providing domestic partner benefits to a company's employees is sound business sense. Despite being boycotted by groups headed by the conservative Southern Baptist Convention, the

Walt Disney Company reported record profits this April.

Disney announced record increases in the second quarter of 1998, showing a 22 percent rise in earnings, including 1.2 billion dollars in revenues from its theme parks, which had been a major target of the boycott. Share prices and share revenue have both gone up dramatically in the year since the boycott began.

In an early May appearance on the *Today* show, Disney's CEO Michael Eisner said, "We are a public company and we would have to announce that [the boycott had hurt us], and we've announced just the opposite. Our earnings have been going up substantially."

Disney has repeatedly stated that it does not schedule or promote "Gay Days," which also occur at other local theme parks which are not owned by Disney.

(compiled by the ATM staff from various news sources, including Reuters)

News Stations Show 'Gay Threat' in Ratings Gambit

(May 20, 1998) *The Washington Post* reports that at least 20 local news stations around the country have aired hidden-camera footage of gay men soliciting sex in bathrooms in an effort to boost ratings.

The reports apparently began in Seattle during the February sweeps, then spread to San Diego, San Antonio, Chicago, Miami and Charlotte. They have now resurfaced for the May sweeps, *The Post* says.

Richard Goldstein, executive editor of the *Village Voice*, told *The Post* that reporters went to the bathrooms soliciting sex from other men, then filmed the result. The news stations then presented their "findings" as a threat to children.

In an example Goldstein says was typical of other broadcasts across the country, Fox's New York affiliate pushed the spot by telling viewers, "you'll think twice" about allowing your kids to use a public restroom because "sexual deviants are roving our local stores and malls."

Goldstein, who has written about the controversy, told *The Post*, "They're presenting it as a clear and present danger to children. By doing that, they deflect attention away from the question of sensationalism and intruding on privacy and present it as having an overriding social purpose."

The hidden-camera footage for the Fox-New York report was shot at Rockefeller Center, a Bloomingdale's on Long Island and a Sears on Staten Island.

"We stand behind the report," WNYW spokeswoman Alike Besson told *The Post*. "We felt it would be of great interest to parents and children."

Charlotte's WSOC-TV turned over its tapes to the local vice squad, which made nearly a dozen arrests.

(from Datalounge and wire reports)

Newt Gingrich Raises \$1,900 for National Gay & Lesbian Task Force

(June 6, 1998) A signed calendar from Newt Gingrich and accompanying correspondence garnered the highest bid at a Washington, DC charity auction for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF).

The calendar skyrocketed in value after NGLTF received a fax from the office of House Speaker Newt Gingrich, one of the most homophobic members of Congress, denouncing the organization and claiming his autographed calendar was donated to the organization without his knowledge or consent.

"Newt Gingrich has been trying to turn back the clock. Now he wants to take back the whole calendar," said Kerry Lobel, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "We were originally dubious of the worth of such a liberally distributed item, but the Speaker has just significantly increased its value."

Coordinators for NGLTF's Second Annual Capital Pride Auction sent hundreds of donation requests for the event to celebrities and political figures, including Gingrich, who routinely sends autographed "Friends of Newt" calendars to charitable organizations upon request. On March 12, Brooke Ransom of Gingrich's office sent the autographed calendar to NGLTF with a letter stating, "I hope the event is a great success!" Today, Ransom sent another letter saying, "The calendar was sent to you without the Speaker's knowledge or approval" and "anyone who has followed his career knows that he is not supportive of the Gay and Lesbian Task Force [sic]."

"We actually have been following the Speaker's career but were not aware that he had a specific position on the Task Force," continued Lobel. "We will be requesting a meeting to brief him on our agenda of fairness and equality for all people."

The Speaker's office also aided, albeit indirectly, in garnering not only money but publicity for the event. The auction, along with letters from his office, was mentioned in a June 6 *Washington Post* article. After much spirited bidding, the "Gingrich Package" went for a whopping \$1,900, beating out more than 600 other items including works of art, cruises and trips, and Redskins tickets, many donated by such notables as Oprah Winfrey, Elizabeth Taylor and Rosie O'Donnell.

"We're incredibly grateful to Speaker Gingrich for his generosity and his help," Lobel stated. "The Speaker has our assurance that

"Newt Gingrich has been trying to turn back the clock. Now he wants to take back the whole calendar."

— Kerry Lobel, NGLTF Executive Director

we will commit the proceeds from his calendar and the letters to fighting the anti-gay intolerance and discrimination he spurs."

Appropriately, Garrith Xavier-Carey, the winning bidder for the "Gingrich Package," lives in Atlanta, GA, and was raised in Cobb County, Gingrich's own home county.

"Contrary to the reputation Newt Gingrich gives Georgia, our state is at the forefront of pro-gay and pro-lesbian issues," Xavier-Carey said. "I thought it fitting to bring the calendar home to Newt since he was so generous to give it to us."

(from NGLTF)

Study Says Bisexual Men Less Safe with Women

BOSTON, MA: Bisexual men are significantly less likely to have safe sex with women than with men, according to a study reported in the April issue of the *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes and Human Retrovirology*. While gay and bisexual men showed similar rates of condom use during male-male anal intercourse, the study found, "bisexual men were three times as likely to have unprotected sex with their female partner as their male partner." Dr.

Robert Goldstein of the Fenway Community Health Center in Boston led the team of researchers. Goldstein's team believes these findings illustrate the importance of reporting all sexual behaviors in studies of HIV-risk behavior that include men who have sex with men. In addition, the researchers stressed, the issue of bisexual activity needs to be addressed in HIV intervention programs targeted at men who have sex with men.

(from Reuters)

Transsexual Wins Eurovision Song Contest

1998 may be the third time Israel has won the Eurovision Song Contest, but it is the first time the winner is a she who once was a he.

Dana International narrowly beat out stiff competition from Malta to emerge victorious. She gained fame as a female impersonator in Tel Aviv nightclubs before her sex change operation in 1993.

All news briefs have been culled from press releases sent to ATM by the named organizations or written by staff. To submit a press release, email it to: news@anythingthatmoves.com.

News only, please. We do not consider commercial products news. Thanks.

South Africa's Unnatural Offences Act Struck Down

On May 8, 1998, South Africa struck down as unconstitutional the common-law crimes of sodomy, unnatural sexual offences, and section 20A of the Sexual Offences Act, which criminalized any act calculated to stimulate sexual passion or to give sexual gratification between "two men at a party."

It was a historic decision, handed down on the second anniversary of the promulgation of the 1996 Constitution.

Delivering his judgment, Judge Jonathan Heher of the Johannesburg High Court stated that "constitutionally, [the people of South Africa have] reached a stage of maturity in which recognition of the dignity and innate worth of every member of society is not a matter of reluctant concession, but is one of easy acceptance."

The National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE) responded jubilantly to this long-awaited judgment, calling it a "sombre indictment of [South Africa's] intolerant colonial past during which these common-law offences carried the ultimate penalty of death," and declaring the decision to be "[one] of which every South African, irrespective of their sexual orientation, can be proud."

It was in November 1997 that the Coalition and the statutory South African Human Rights Commission applied to the High Court to have these common-law "crimes" declared unconstitutional. The African National Congress (ANC) immediately welcomed the judgment, stating that it "represents a significant milestone in the alignment of South Africa's laws with the basic human rights contained in the Constitution's Bill of Rights."

Mary Sigaji, Africa Specialist at the International Gay & Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC) warmly welcomed this landmark decision, stating that, "We have a lot to learn in the United States about sound jurisprudence based on the inherent equality of all people. The United States should heed the call from South Africa and repeal the sodomy laws in those remaining states which still maintain them."

The National Coalition for Gay and Lesbian Equality (NCGLE) is a voluntary association of more than 74 lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered organizations in South Africa. The Coalition is mandated to work for legal and social equality for its members.

(from IGLHRC)

Ypsilanti, Michigan Voters Uphold Civil Rights for All

(May 6, 1998) In Michigan, Ypsilanti voters upheld a city ordinance banning discrimination based on sexual orientation, race, and other characteristics, despite a massive effort by right-wing forces including the Christian Coalition and football star Reggie White. Queer groups including the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) and the Human Rights Commission (HRC) have hailed the ordinance's passing as a victory.

Last December, the Ypsilanti City Council unanimously passed the ordinance, which bans discrimination in housing, employment and city contracts, and includes race, disability, and other classifications along with sexual orientation. It was stayed in February when opponents collected signatures to hold a voter referendum on repeal of the ordinance. At a rally in support of repealing the anti-discrimination ordinance, Green Bay Packers star and ordained minister White said, "If there is anything I am anti-against, it's sin."

Despite the Christian Coalition's heavyweight efforts, including a high profile lineup of anti-gay stars including White, Alveda Celeste King and the Winans Sisters, local activists in favor of keeping the ordinance formed a coalition that effectively mobilized voters.

"This is the new trend in anti-gay organizing — to attack city ordinances and local measures when they are passed with the threat of repeal or referendum," NGLTF executive director Kerry Lobel said. "Ypsilanti demonstrates that this strategy failed. Our civil rights will not be so easily undone."

"The recent victory in Maine lulled the right wing into grossly miscalculating where America stands on issues of gay and lesbian equality," HRC Political Director Winnie Stachelberg said. "The results in Ypsilanti reflect the attitude of fairness shared by most Americans. The Christian Coalition will soon realize their strategy has boomeranged."

"Most people [in Ypsilanti] were repulsed by the circus of stars who traipsed through town with their message of intolerance. They spoke of love, but it was pretty obvious that they only loved people who were exactly like themselves," Stachelberg said. The outcome of the referendum is in line with a March 1998 Human Rights Campaign poll, which showed that 59 percent of Americans oppose repealing state laws that protect gays and lesbians from workplace discrimination.

Despite this failure in Ypsilanti, it is expected that right-wing groups will continue this strategy.

(compiled by ATM staff)

RI Legislature Votes to Repeal Sodomy Law

On June 2, 1998, the Rhode Island legislature voted to repeal that state's 102-year-old sodomy law. The repeal measure was approved by the Senate and now moves to the governor.

Called the "Abominable and Detestable Crime Against Nature Law," the statute applies to both heterosexual and same-gender sexual activity and carries a sentence of seven to 20 years. A strong coalition of Rhode Island groups have lobbied for several years to repeal the law, including the Rhode Island Alliance for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights.

In 1986, the U.S. Supreme Court found no constitutional right to privacy for same-gender conduct in *Bowers v. Hardwick*. The decision, however, permits each state to decriminalize same-gender sexual relations.

(from NGLTF)

Queer Teens at Higher Risk of Suicide, Risky Behavior

A new study published in the May 5 issue of *Pediatrics* has documented that queer teens are far more likely than their straight peers to be victimized, threatened, and to engage in health-endangering behaviors, including suicide attempts, drug use, and unprotected sex.

The study was conducted in Massachusetts high schools in 1995 as part of a national survey. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey is conducted every two years by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and administered on a voluntary and anonymous basis to high school students in all 50 states. Students participate in the survey on a voluntary and anonymous basis.

The national survey does not include questions about sexual orientation. However, in 1995, Massachusetts added a question asking, "Which of the following best describes you?" Of the over four thousand students surveyed that year, 2.5 percent self-identified as gay, lesbian, or bisexual (0.6 percent identified as gay and 1.9 percent as bisexual). An additional 1.5 percent responded "not sure," 3.7 percent checked "none of the above," and 9.3 percent did not answer the question.

Queer teens engaged in risky behaviors at a younger age; 59 percent reported using alcohol before age 13, 48 percent smoked cigarettes, 37 percent had tried marijuana, 17 percent had tried cocaine, and 27 percent engaged in sexual intercourse. All these figures were higher than among straight teens.

Despite Massachusetts' civil rights law barring anti-gay discrimination, and programs aimed at developing gay/straight student alliances and sensitizing students, teachers, and administrators to gay issues, the school conditions reported in the survey were striking.

Commenting on the results, the authors note that "gay, lesbian and bisexual (GLB) adolescents face tremendous challenges growing up

physically and mentally healthy in a culture that is often unaccepting."

These youth, the authors note, face rejection, isolation, verbal harassment and physical violence both at school and at home. "[T]hese stresses," they say, "place GLB adolescents at risk of engaging in individual risk behaviors, clusters of risk behaviors, and initiating behaviors at an earlier age than their peers."

Nevertheless, the authors emphasize that most queer youth "cope with a variety" of stresses and become healthy and productive adults.

Similar findings about queer youth have been reported for years. But most of these surveys relied on volunteers or on youth who came into social service agencies for help, factors that critics said may have skewed results. Joyce Hunter, a researcher at the HIV Center for Clinical and Behavior Studies at the New York State Psychiatric Institute, said the Massachusetts findings are important because they come from a random sample that reinforces findings from other non-random surveys that she and others have conducted.

The researchers in the Massachusetts study cautioned that while it may be possible to generalize from their results to other public

high school adolescents, the runaway and homeless youth who don't attend school could send the risk behavior figures even higher. At the same time, youth who may not self-identify as non-straight until adulthood may not have the same high-risk profile as the Massachusetts study group and could lower the figures, researchers said.

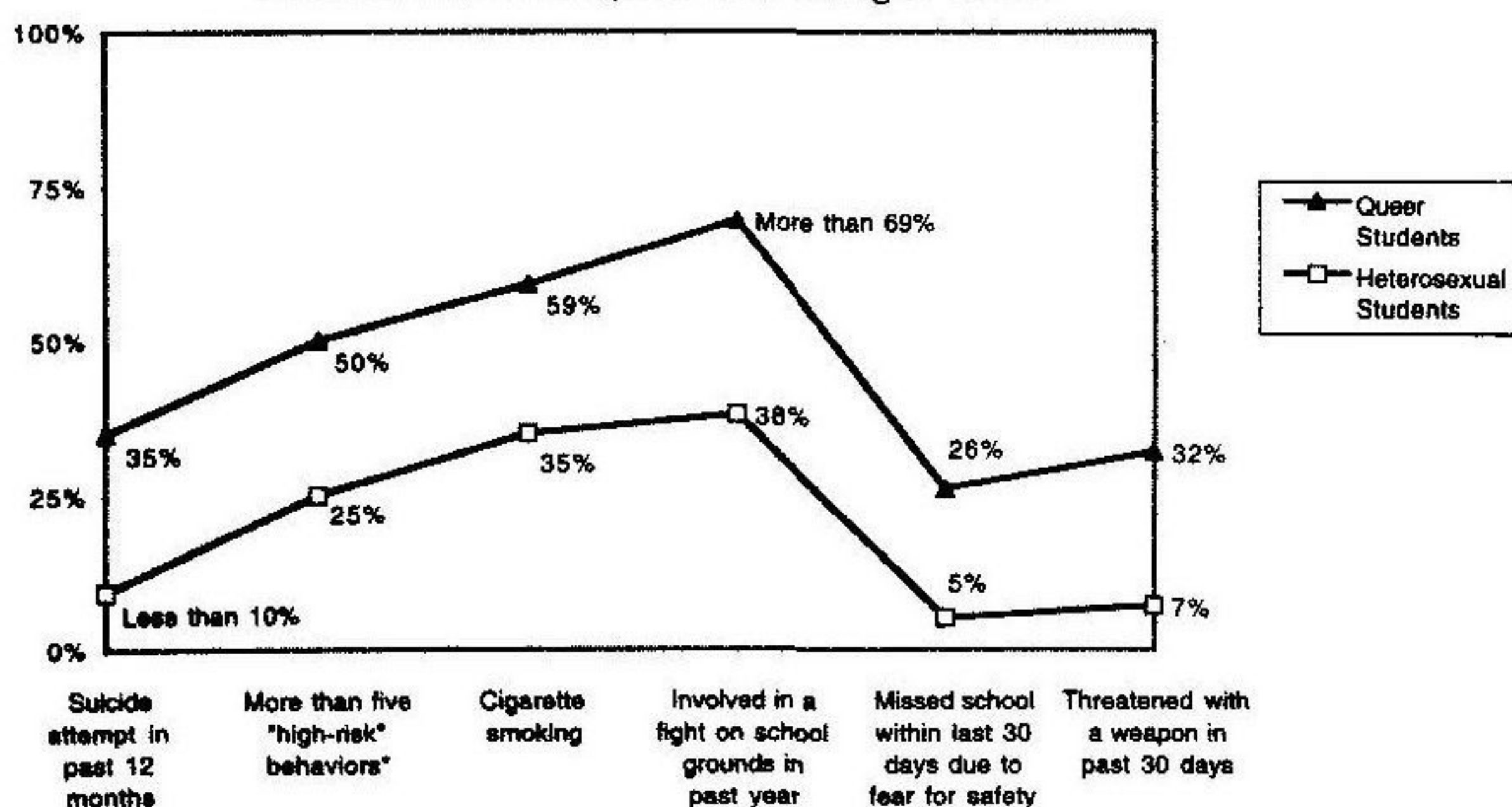
Rea Carey, executive director of the National Youth Advocacy Coalition, a coalition of social service agencies that work with gay youth, called the Massachusetts study important because it's "much harder to dispute government studies which have gone through rigorous review processes."

Despite methodological differences from previous surveys, Carey said, the results on suicide attempts are similar, "which, to me, says that, regardless of who does the study, gay youth are at an incredible risk for taking their own lives."

The statistics on risky behaviors engaged in by gay youth in Massachusetts, Carey said, "despite the 'most highly developed support system for gay youth in the country,' makes me ask, 'What in the world is happening in Oklahoma, what is happening in Texas, what is happening in other states?'"

compiled by ATM staff

Risk Behaviors in Queer and Straight Teens



* Examples of high-risk behaviors include drug/alcohol use; cigarette use; carrying weapons; using drugs/alcohol during sex



New York City Cracks Down on Sex-Oriented Businesses

A New York State Court of Appeals ruled unanimously in late February that New York City could go ahead with a drastic rezoning plan that could do away with most of the city's sex-oriented businesses. The rezoning plan was passed in 1995 as part of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's attempt to "clean up" the city, particularly the concentration of sex business in Times Square. The zoning plan would limit sex-oriented businesses such as peep shows and porn stores to industrial areas of the city. Under the new ordinance, sex businesses cannot be in residential areas or within 500 feet of a school, place of worship, or another sex business.

City officials estimate that the rezoning plan will force all but about 20 of the more than 150 sex businesses in New York's five boroughs to close or relocate. The ordinance has been protested by sex shop owners, sex workers, civil libertarians, and queer activists including the group Sex Panic!

The rezoning plan has been under legal challenge for two years. The recent appeals court ruling said that the city could carry out the plan because its purpose was to reduce crime, not to limit freedom of expression. The Supreme Court has previously ruled that cities can regulate where sex businesses are located, but cannot ban them entirely.

It looked like sex businesses might get a reprieve when federal judge Miriam

Who's Watching Big Brother?

by Liz Highleyman

Goldman Cedarbaum granted a temporary restraining order against the enforcement of the rezoning ordinance after civil libertarians and lawyers representing sex businesses argued that the plan was unconstitutional. After a week of consideration, however, she decided to uphold the state appeals court ruling. Opponents next took their case to the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in early March, once again delaying enforcement of the ordinance.

The federal court hearing was held April 27 and a decision is forthcoming.

Bi Poly Poet Under Fire Over Arts Funding In Canada

In Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, the widely read *Alberta Report* magazine has called for the withdrawal of state arts funding for erotic literature. The magazine reprinted without permission excerpts from bi polyamorous playwright and poet Timothy Anderson's collection *Neurotic Erotic* in an attempt to drum up public sentiment against arts funding. Copies of the poems were also sent to politicians and conservative religious groups.

Alberta Report claimed that the poems "celebrate bestiality, pedophilia, sado-masochism, blasphemy and a host of other perversions." Anderson sought a legal opinion that found that the book does not violate criminal code obscenity guidelines.

The magazine wants the state to stop subsidizing contentious material and wants the government to judge the content of works to be funded, which is currently done by peer juries.

All provincial arts funding in Alberta comes from lottery proceeds, not tax money. No money was given directly to

produce *Neurotic Erotic*, but the book's publisher does receive public block grant funding.

Cincinnati Charges Publisher Larry Flynt with Obscenity

In March, police raided a new adult bookstore opened by porn publisher Larry Flynt and his brother Jimmy in Cincinnati, Ohio. Flynt opened the store, which sells adult videos, magazines, and sex toys, to challenge the city's laws regulating sex-oriented businesses. On April 7, the Flynts were indicted and charged with 15 counts, including charges of pandering obscenity and disseminating matter harmful to juveniles. If convicted on all charges, the brothers face 24 years in prison. The store allegedly sold a porn video to a 14-year-old boy. According to Hamilton County prosecutor Joseph Deters, the videos in question were "the most vile, degrading matter ever sold in Hamilton County." Larry Flynt was previously convicted of obscenity in Cincinnati in 1977 for selling *Hustler* magazine. He maintains that community standards have changed in the ensuing two decades.

Privacy Advocates Assail Wider Access to Personal Medical Records

Numerous privacy advocates, including the American Civil Liberties Union, have denounced a new federal proposal that would permit broad access to personal medical records. The proposal was drafted by Senators Robert Bennett (R-Utah) and Jim Jeffords (R-Vermont). It would remove many existing restrictions on the disclosure of medical information by healthcare providers and public health agencies, and would override state laws that ensure greater confidentiality.

The proposal follows a recommendation made by Health and Human Secretary Donna Shalala last fall that would give greater access to medical records to law enforcement personnel. Opponents say the proposal could have a particularly negative effect on people with HIV and other sensitive medical conditions.

UK Sex Conviction Upheld

In the U.K., an appeals judge upheld the conviction of a group of gay men known as the Bolton 7, who were arrested for engaging in consensual homosexual activity in a private home. However, the men were not sentenced to jail time, and instead received probation and community service.

Charges were brought because one of the men was 17 and a half years old at the time of the alleged sexual activity, six months short of England's age of consent. The two men who had sex with the younger man were entered into the

country's sex offenders' registry.

According to Peter Tatchell of the gay rights group OutRage!, five of the seven men were convicted under the same gross indecency law that was used to convict Oscar Wilde in 1895. Three were prosecuted under a buggery law that dates back to 1533.

The Bolton 7 received letters of support from politicians, religious leaders, and human rights groups. OutRage member John Hunt said, "The Bolton 7 case demonstrates that the gay community remains vulnerable to police witch-hunts. These antiquated laws, which are still on the statute books, can be activated at any time. It is a warning against apathy and complacency."

U.S. Judge Strikes Down Maine Computer Child Porn Law

In April, U.S. District Court judge Gene Carter struck down a recently passed pornography law that would have regulated images created by computers. The Portland, Maine decision is the first

ruling on the Child Pornography Prevention Act of 1996.

The law attempted to prohibit images of adults that were altered to make them appear to be younger than 18 years old. Carter ruled that the wording of the law was unconstitutionally vague. Under the previous child porn law, only images that actually involved children were illegal. The case is likely to be appealed to the First U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston and perhaps ultimately to the Supreme Court.

Senate Proposes New Restrictions on Online Porn

The Supreme Court defeat of the Communications Decency Act in June 1997 has not deterred legislators who want to restrict sexually explicit material on the Internet. In March, the Senate Commerce Committee approved a bill by Senator Dan Coats (R-Indiana) that would require providers of online content considered harmful to minors to prohibit access by children.

Representatives Mike Oxley (R-Ohio) and Jim Greenwood (R-Pennsylvania) plan to introduce a companion bill in the House.

Coats' bill is written to overcome some of the Supreme Court's objections to the CDA. It is restricted to commercial services and uses a narrower legal standard for acceptable material based on harm to minors rather than being "offensive" or "indecent."

Liz Highblyman is a freelance journalist and health educator. She is editor of the pansexual leather community newspaper Cuir Underground and associate editor of the anthology Bisexual Politics: Theories, Queries and Visions (Haworth Press, 1995).

Updated 1998 Edition

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About BABN

The Bay Area Bisexual Network is an alliance of bisexual and bi-supportive groups, individuals, and resources in the San Francisco Bay Area. BABN is connecting the bisexual community and creating a movement for acceptance and support of human diversity by coordinating forums, social events, opportunities, and resources.

BABN is by nature educational in that we are supporting the rights of all women and men to develop as whole beings without oppression due to age, race, religion, color, class or different abilities, nor because of sexual preference, gender identity, gender preference and/or responsible consensual sexual behavior preferences. We also support acceptance in employment, housing, health care, and education. This includes access to complete sexual information, free expression of responsible consensual sexual activity, and other freedoms. Membership is open to all bi-positive people whether or not they consider themselves bisexual.

BABN sponsors a speakers' network of bisexuals from diverse backgrounds, races, lifestyles, and cultures who speak on all topics and issues concerning bisexuality. Call 415-703-7977 voice mail box #1, or write BABN at 2261 Market St., #496, San Francisco, CA 94114-1600.

BIS BEYOND THE BAY

AUSTRALIAN BISEXUAL NETWORK: National information, support, advocacy and social network for bi men, women, partners/families, and bi and bi-friendly groups. P.O. Box 490, Lutwyche, Brisbane, QLD 4030. <http://www.ozemail.com.au/~ausbinet/index.html>

BINET USA: National bisexual network dedicated to visibility, resource sharing,

and political activism toward a multicultural, co-gendered, bisexual community. Quarterly newsletter, conferences. Info: PO Box 7327, Langley Park, MD 20787 USA. 202.986.7186.

BISEXUAL RESOURCE CENTER: Projects include The Bisexual Archives and the Bisexual Resource Office. PO Box 639, Cambridge, MA 02140 USA. 617.424.9595.

GLASGOW BISEXUAL NETWORK: Social support and health information for bisexuals and their supporters in Glasgow, Scotland, UK. Volunteers and bi-friendly folks needed to help run the group. Regular social meetings at the Gay & Lesbian Centre, 11 Dixon St., Glasgow. For more information, contact: Dominic Aveyard, GBN Group Coordinator, 127 Glenhead St., Parkhouse, Glasgow, Scotland, UK, Postcode: G22-6DQ 0141-336-4548 evenings and weekdays.

GRUPO TRIANGULO ROSA: To help the human rights of BGLT people, struggle against discrimination, help coordinate a Central American movement for the rights of sexual minorities, and prevent HIV. Apartado Postal 1619-4050, Alajuela, Costa Rica. 506.23.2411.

MOSCOW BI-SEX CLUB: Union for people with unorthodox desires. Looking for international contacts, ideas, support. PO Box N3, Moscow Russia 123308.

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST BISEXUAL NETWORK: A packet of materials of interest to bisexuals, including a newsletter, is available from the Unitarian Church by sending \$10 to UUBN, PO Box 10818, Portland, ME 04104 USA.

WAZOBIA: For women who love women and men who love men however they may self-identify, BGLT or questioning people from continental Africa. PO Box 255, New York, NY 10116 USA. 212.690.3705.

Anything That Moves is interested in listing national bisexual resources and projects that involve the entire community. To list your organization, please send complete contact information to:

Bi Resources Listings
Anything That Moves
2261 Market St. #496
San Francisco, CA 94114-1600
qswitch@igc.apc.org

or browse our Web site (sponsored by Planet Out):

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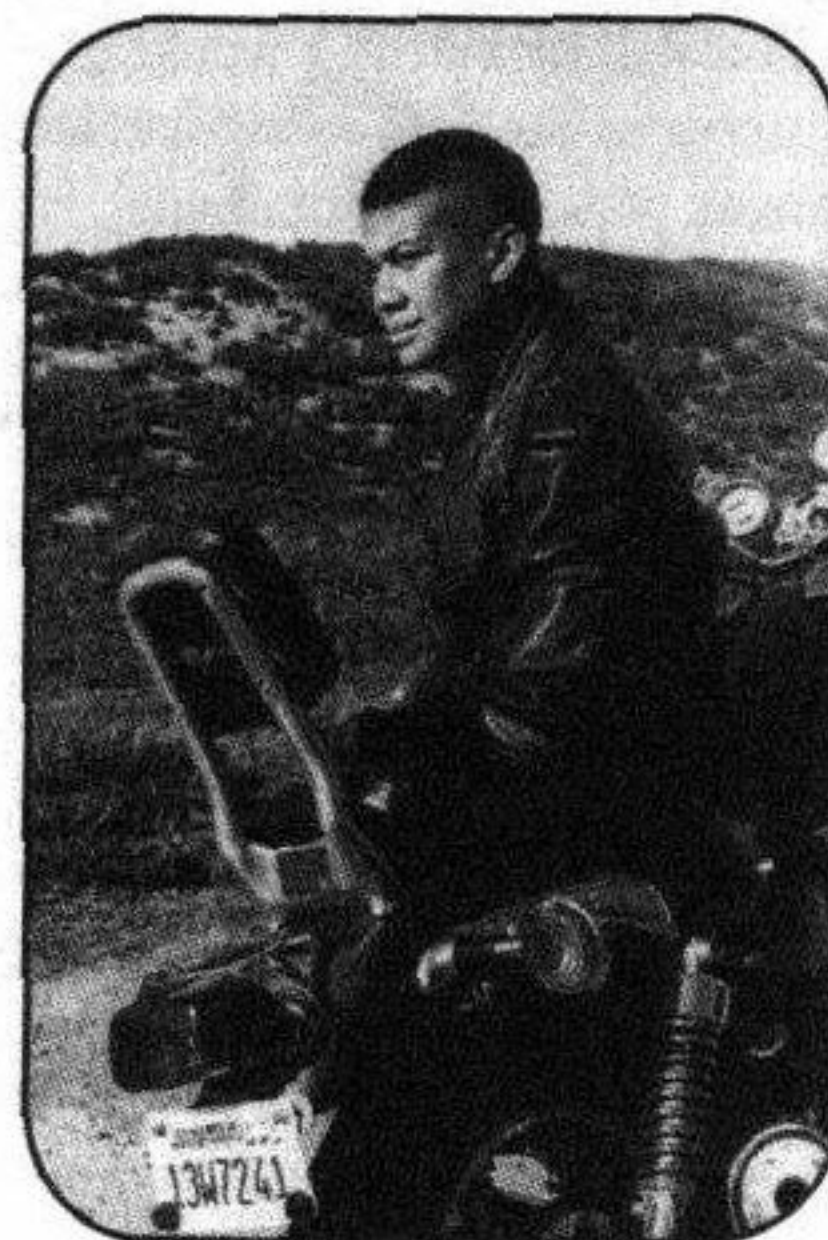


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From David Bowie and Elton John to Madonna and Jill Sobule, bisexuality has always flourished in the music biz, and in the near future, *Anything That Moves* is turning the spotlight on our icons and embarrassments, the men and women who have championed (and occasionally abandoned) the cause, and the effects they've had on us.

Got submissions? We want 'em!

Anything That Moves welcomes unsolicited manuscripts, photographs, and illustrations. We are particularly interested in work by bi/pan/or-similarly-sexuals, people of color, transgender- or transsexual-identified, those who are differently abled, and those challenged by AIDS or HIV, as well as material not previously published and/or from new or unpublished writers.

WRITERS:

ATM accepts submissions such as literary, film, theater, and music reviews; fiction; non-fiction commentary and feature articles; and news reports on the bisexual community or individuals.

FICTION: Any content is up for consideration and need not address bisexuality specifically; however, bisexual content is given priority. Please, 2500 words or less.

NON-FICTION COMMENTARY: *ATM* provides space for writers to explore contemporary issues related to bisexuality that are editorial in nature — personal opinions and viewpoints. Submissions should not exceed 900 words.

REVIEWS: *ATM* publishes reviews of books, film, music, exhibits, theater, and anything else related to bisexual artists, topics, and/or themes as well as subjects of interest to bisexuals. Reviews should not exceed 400 words. Black & white photos or stats of reviewed book jackets, or black & white theatrical/portfolio promotional photos to accompany reviews, are greatly appreciated.

FEATURES & INTERVIEWS: *ATM* publishes features relating to any angle of bisexual life — cultural, lifestyle, spiritual, sexual, health, relationship, political... you name it. Please, 2500 words or less.

PHOTOGRAPHERS AND ILLUSTRATORS:

ATM is interested in receiving (read: at times desperate for) photo submissions (single photos as well as photo essays), illustrations, computer graphics, and cartoons. Erotic/nude photos will be considered. All photos containing models or subjects with identifiable and/or copyrighted likenesses must be accompanied by a signed photo release form and age statement. Illustrations must be submitted in stat, velox, or clean photocopy form. Do not submit originals, as *ATM* cannot be responsible for them. Photographer's, designer's or illustrator's name, address, and phone number *must* be attached to the back of each submission.

THE FINE PRINT, PART I:

Submissions must be typed, double-spaced, on clean white paper and must include the article's name and word count on each page. Please include the author's name, address, phone number and email address, if applicable, on the cover letter and the last page of the submission. Also, please note in your cover letter whether you have submitted your manuscript to any other media source, and if it has been previously published.

Submissions must include a SASE. Handwritten, illegible, or single-spaced copy will be returned. *ATM* gladly accepts manuscripts on disk *only* if accompanied by a hard copy, as you know how finicky disks-through-the-mail can be. Disk submissions by disk must be saved in MS Word for Macintosh 4.0 through 6.0 format; we cannot translate MS Word 98.

Send all submissions to: *Anything That Moves*: Submissions, 2261 Market St. #496, San Francisco, CA 94114-1600. Manuscripts may also be emailed to: submissions@anythingthatmoves.com.

THE FINE PRINT, PART II:

Notification of acceptance will be made within 6-8 weeks, although publication date cannot be given (accepted material is often kept on file and considered for each new issue). Accepted material cannot be returned. Do not send originals, as *ATM* will not be responsible for them. Rejected material returned only if accompanied by the correct amount of postage.

PLEASE NOTE:

All submissions must be accompanied by a cover letter that includes a brief (30 words or less) biography of the writer and a listing of submissions by title. Please indicate if the contribution has been published or submitted for consideration elsewhere.

Pen names are permitted; however, the author's real name, address, and phone number must accompany the submission.

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cropped hair and eyelashes is often female



cropped hair, eyelashes and checked shirt, usually lesbian



facial hair is mainly male



An Adams apple always means male



No Adams apple is sometimes female



Glad to be of service, have a nice day!!

I haven't marched at Pride before...

It's not laziness—



what me walk! Taxi!

it's political.

I had to boycott the march 'cos bi's were excluded.



what on earth do they mean 'celebrate our gay side'?

100% Bi

This also meant I could have a lie in,



I'll just have a couple more hours

& not be too tired at the park.



I'll just lie here for a couple of hours

But that's not the point.

Now— It's 'Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride'

so I'll have to come up with some other excuse



So, of course I'll march.

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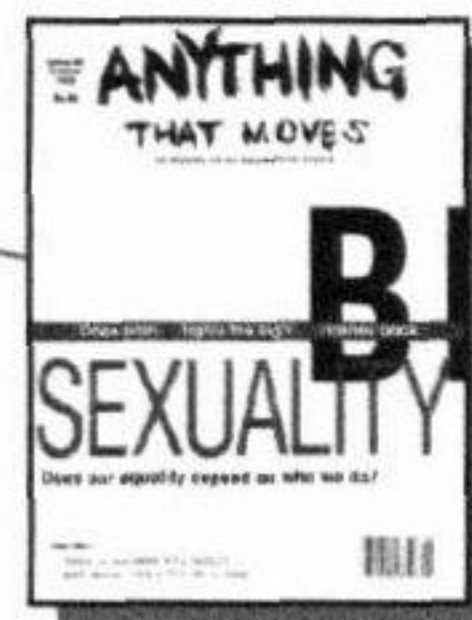
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 - Bisexual Art
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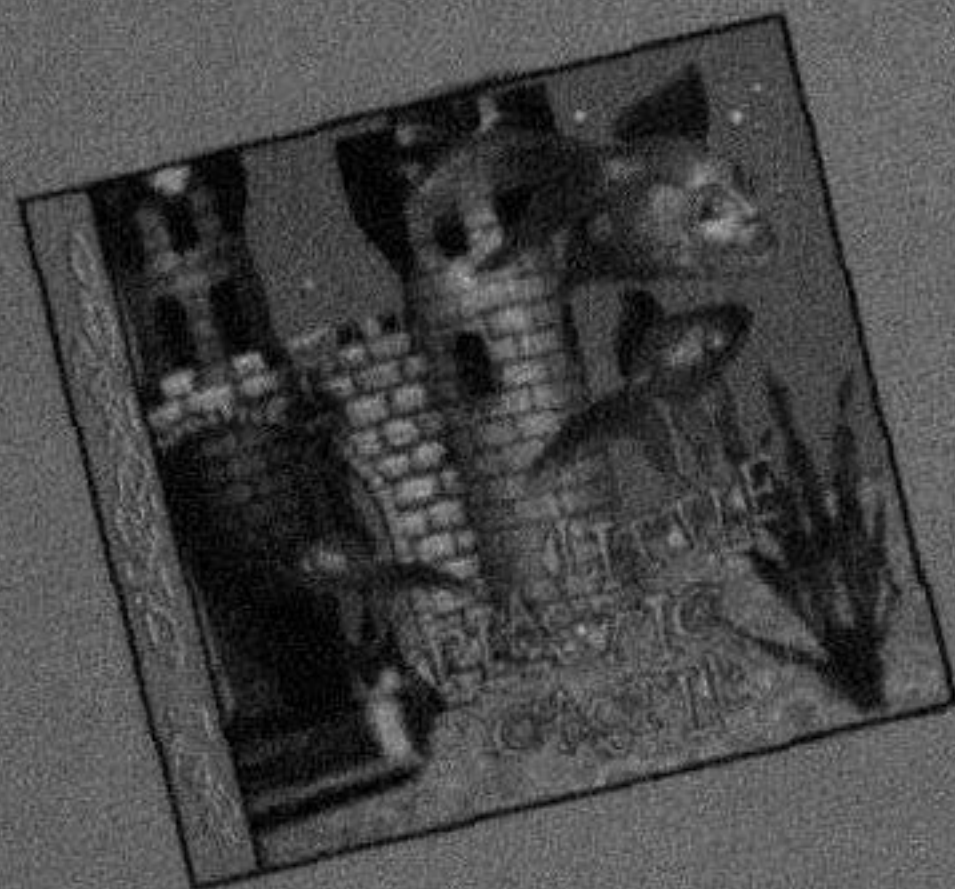
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